

A STUDY GUIDE

God Is Love

Loving Like God

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God."

1 JOHN 4:7 — KJV

Frank Wyatt Ministries • "It's Not Too Late"

Loving Like God

"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." — 1 John 4:8, KJV

1

How I Think

Is my mind renewed to the Word? When negative thinking comes, am I counteracting it with the truth — or letting it run?

2

How I Speak

Am I speaking love, grace, and mercy — or judgment and disagreement? My words are a report on my heart.

3

Do I Forgive?

Am I quick to forgive? Am I letting go of what, at the end of the day, really didn't matter?

4

How I Treat Others

Compassion, kindness, love? Am I seeing it from their side? Do I have to be right? Do I let it go, or hold on?

THE QUICK INVENTORY

Am I loving like God says? • Walking with grace? • Walking with mercy? • Walking in judgment toward others? • Stirring up disagreement? • Quick to forgive? • Treating others with compassion, kindness, and love? • Do I have to be right? • Am I putting myself first?

When people interact with me, do they experience the love, grace, mercy, and compassion of God through the way I treat them?

If I'm struggling to get along with others, something isn't right — and it usually starts with my walk with God. The full teaching is on the pages that follow.

Before You Start

This is your own teaching, laid back out so you can walk through it slow and let it get down into you. Everything here came from what you said about 1 John 4 — God is love, and what it looks like when His love starts showing up in the way you and I live.

Take it one section at a time. Don't rush it. Read the verse, read the teaching, then stop and answer the questions before you move on. There's a spot to fill in the key line for each part — write it in your own hand, because the thing you write down is the thing you keep.

How each section is built:

- **What it is** — the plain point of that piece.
- **In the Word** — the Scripture that backs it, King James.
- **What it means** — opening the verse up.
- **Bring it home** — what it asks of you today.
- **Say it back** — fill-in and review so it sticks.

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WHOLE STUDY

"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." — 1 John 4:8, KJV

The Anchor

There are so many definitions of love out there. So let's say it plain, the way the Bible says it: **God is love.**

1 JOHN 4:7-8 — KJV

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."

1 JOHN 4:16 — KJV

"And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."

That's the ground we're standing on. Love isn't just something God *does*. Love is part of who He *is*. His mercy, His patience, His forgiveness, His faithfulness, even His correction and His care — all of it flows out of who He is.

So if I want to understand what real love looks like, I have to start with God, because He's the source of it. And if I want to grow in love, I've got to spend time with Him. There's no shortcut around that.

The Foundation: If I Want to Know Love, I've Got to Know God

Here's the root of the whole thing. If I want to know love, I need to know God. And the more time I spend with Him, the more His love ought to start showing up in me.

As I get to know God better, His love should begin to show up more clearly in the way I live and the way I treat other people. That's the test. Not what I say I believe — what comes out of me when I'm around folks.

THE WORD BEHIND IT

In verse 8, the love John is talking about is *agape* — the giving kind of love, the kind that keeps on loving whether the other person earns it or not. That's the love God *is*. And that's the love He's trying to grow in you and me.

The closer I walk with God, the more His character starts to shape four things:

- How I think.
- How I speak.
- How I forgive.
- How I treat people.

Those four are the rest of this study. Let's take them one at a time.

SAY IT BACK — THE FOUNDATION

Fill it in: "If I want to know _____, I need to know _____."

Review: What are the four areas God's character should start to shape in me?

- 1. _____ 2. _____
- 3. _____ 4. _____

Loving Like God: It Takes Commitment, Effort, and Discipline

So I love like God. That means I'm going to see other people through *His* eyes — with compassion. God sees us a whole lot different than we see each other. And when I start looking at people the way He looks at them, everything changes.

But let me be honest about what that takes. If I want to grow in love, I need to spend time with Him, and that takes:

- Commitment.
- Effort.
- Discipline.

Even on the days when I don't feel like I've got the time, or I'm just not in the mood — none of that matters. We just have to do it. And when we do, it's going to affect every single part of our lives.

ROMANS 12:2 — KJV

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Notice it says *transformed*. That's not a one-time thing. That's a daily walk. You don't renew your mind once and coast. You spend time in the Word, and little by little God's character begins to shape in you.

SAY IT BACK — LOVING LIKE GOD

Fill it in: Growing in love takes _____, _____, and _____.

Review: How does God see people differently than we see each other — and what should that change about how I look at folks?

The Four Places His Love Shows Up

1. How I Think

WHAT IT IS

Before love ever comes out of my mouth or my hands, it starts in my head. So the first question is simple: do my thoughts line up with God's thoughts?

IN THE WORD

PHILIPPIANS 4:8 — KJV

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

2 CORINTHIANS 10:5 — KJV

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

WHAT IT MEANS

Paul gives me a list of what to set my mind on — things that are true, honest, pure, lovely. And then in Corinthians he says I've got a job to do with my thoughts: bring every one of them into captivity. That means I don't just let my mind run wherever it wants. When a thought lifts itself up against what God says, I take it captive.

BRING IT HOME

So here's the question for you and me: Is my mind renewed to the Word of God? And when I've got negative thinking going — what am I using to counteract it? If the answer is "nothing," that's where the work starts. You counteract the Word of the enemy with the Word of God. You can't out-think a lie with your own worry. You've got to put the truth in.

SAY IT BACK — HOW I THINK

Fill it in: "Bringing into captivity every _____ to the obedience of Christ." (2 Cor. 10:5)

Review: When I catch myself in negative thinking, what am I supposed to use to counteract it?

2. How I Speak

WHAT IT IS

Once my thinking is right, my mouth ought to line up with it. So I've got to ask: what words am I actually speaking? Am I speaking love, grace, and mercy — or am I speaking judgment and stirring up disagreement?

IN THE WORD

EPHESIANS 4:29 — KJV

"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."

MATTHEW 12:34 — KJV

"...for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

PROVERBS 15:1 — KJV

"A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger."

WHAT IT MEANS

Jesus tells us why the mouth matters so much — because it just pours out whatever's already sitting in the heart. So my words are a report on my heart. If judgment keeps coming out, that's telling me something about what's built up inside. And Proverbs shows me the choice I've got in every hard moment: a soft answer, or grievous words. One turns the wrath away. The other pours gas on it.

BRING IT HOME

My speech is supposed to *minister grace* to the people hearing it. That's a high bar. It means when I open my mouth, the person walks away built up, not tore down. So do an inventory of your words. Am I speaking love? Grace? Mercy? Or am I always the one bringing the judgment and the argument?

SAY IT BACK — HOW I SPEAK

Fill it in: "For out of the _____ of the heart the _____ speaketh." (Matt. 12:34)

Review: My words are a report on what? And what is my speech supposed to do for the people who hear it?

3. Do I Forgive?

WHAT IT IS

Here's a plain one. Am I quick to forgive? Am I quick to let go of things that, at the end of the day, really don't matter?

IN THE WORD

EPHESIANS 4:32 — KJV

"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

COLOSSIANS 3:13 — KJV

"Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."

MATTHEW 6:14-15 — KJV

"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

WHAT IT MEANS

Look at the standard God gives me. I'm to forgive "even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." That's the measuring stick — not how much the other person deserves it, but how much I've already been forgiven. And Jesus makes it real serious in Matthew 6: the forgiveness I hand out and the forgiveness I receive are tied together. I can't hold a grudge with one hand and reach for God's mercy with the other.

BRING IT HOME

So much of what we hold onto, at the end of the day, really didn't matter. Am I quick to let it go? Or am I carrying stuff around that's only weighing *me* down? Forgiveness isn't saying the wrong was right. It's letting God settle it so I don't have to keep carrying it.

SAY IT BACK — DO I FORGIVE?

Fill it in: "...forgiving one another, even as _____ for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (Eph. 4:32)

Review: What's the standard I'm supposed to measure my forgiveness by? And why does Matthew 6:14–15 make this so serious?

4. How Do I Treat Others?

WHAT IT IS

This is where all of it comes out into the open. Do I treat people with compassion, kindness, and love? Do I see things from the other person's point of view — or only my own? Do I have to be right? Do I let stuff go, or do I hold onto it?

IN THE WORD

1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-5 — KJV

"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil."

PHILIPPIANS 2:3-4 — KJV

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."

WHAT IT MEANS

That word "charity" in First Corinthians is the same *agape* love we started with — God's kind of love. And look what it does: it's patient, it's kind, it's not easily provoked, it "seeketh not her own." That last part is the heart of it. Real love isn't looking out for number one. Philippians says the same thing a different way — esteem the other person better than yourself, and look out for *their* interests, not just your own.

BRING IT HOME

Here's the honest question: do I always have to be right? Because "seeketh not her own" and "I've got to win this argument" can't live in the same house. Loving like God means I can let somebody else be seen, be heard, be right — and I don't lose a thing. I'm seeing them through the eyes of God, with compassion and gentleness.

SAY IT BACK — HOW DO I TREAT OTHERS?

Fill it in: "Charity suffereth long, and is _____ ... _____ not her own." (1 Cor. 13:4–5)

Review: What's the connection between "having to be right" and this kind of love? Where do they clash?

Tying It Together: If I'm Struggling to Get Along, Something Isn't Right

Here's the whole thing pulled into one line. According to 1 John 4:7–8, if I'm struggling to get along with others, that's an indication that something isn't right. And most of the time, what isn't right is my relationship with God.

THE BASICS

If I'm struggling to get along with others, something isn't right — and it usually starts with my walk with God, not with them.

If I'm really open to my relationship with God, I'm going to listen to what thus saith the Lord. And as I put the Word I'm learning into my mind and my heart — and then put it into *action* — my behavior should change. That's the order. Word in the mind, Word in the heart, Word into action.

The greatest relationship you and I can have is our relationship with God, and it ought to be the most important one we've got. Think about it — if you enjoy somebody, you want to hang out with them. The more you hang out with God, the more there is to know, because His ways are so much different than ours.

And I'm grateful for that. We've got a heavenly Father — a Dad — who loves us right where we're at. He didn't wait for us to clean up first. So we need to do the same with other people. See them through the eyes of God, with compassion and gentleness.

1 JOHN 4:11 — KJV

"Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."

That's the "so." Because God loved us like that, we ought to love each other like that. It's not a suggestion. It's what flows out of a life that's really walking with Him.

Take an Inventory

We can really tell where we're at if we just do a simple inventory of our lives. What's my priority? What's my first go-to? Sit back today and reflect honestly on these:

THE DAILY INVENTORY

- Am I loving like God says?
- Am I walking with grace?
- Am I walking with mercy?
- Am I walking in judgment toward others?
- Am I always trying to stir up stuff and start a disagreement?
- Am I quick to forgive — and do I let go of things that, at the end of the day, really didn't matter?
- Am I treating others with compassion, kindness, and love?
- Do I see things from other people's point of view, or only my own?
- Do I have to be right?
- Do I let stuff go, or do I hold onto it?
- Am I selfish in my ways? Do I put myself first?

We're never all going to see eye to eye. But we can still respect one another and honor one another. And when I look at that list honest, I'll be the first to say it: I've probably still got a ways to go. That's alright. I just need to spend some time with God and do some simple reflecting.

The Question to Sit With

SIT WITH THIS

Does the way I **think**, **speak**, **forgive**, and **treat others** show that I'm truly walking in the love of God?

All four parts matter. If my thinking is where it should be, my speaking will line up with it. My heart's going to get examined, and what's in it is going to show up in how I talk to people and how I treat them. If I'm treating others with kindness and appreciation, that's one of the real ways the love of God gets put into action.

Now — there are going to be days when we're only running at 60 percent. Other days, maybe 90. And there are going to be days we flat-out miss it. That's the truth. But it's about doing a self-inventory each day:

- Looking at our interactions with others.

- Looking at how we treated them.
- Thanking God for His mercy and His grace.

I can just say that I do my best, and I'm still a work in progress. I don't think anybody's truly plateaued at 100 percent. It's a day-by-day process. And sometimes it's a minute-by-minute, second-by-second decision that we get to make, every single day, by the goodness and mercy of God.

THE BOTTOM LINE

When people interact with me, do they experience the love, grace, mercy, and compassion of God through the way I treat them?

Pull It All Back Together

Before you close this out, work back through these from memory. If you get stuck, the section is right there to check yourself.

WHOLE-STUDY REVIEW

1. What's the anchor of this whole study — the plain statement about who God is? (Verse?)
2. Why does knowing God have to come *before* loving like God?
3. Name the four places His love is supposed to show up in me.
4. What does it take to grow in love — three words?
5. How I think: when negative thinking comes, what do I counteract it with?
6. How I speak: my words are a report on *what*?
7. Do I forgive: what's the standard I measure my forgiveness by?
8. How I treat others: what does "seeketh not her own" clash with in me?
9. The tie-together line: "If I'm struggling to get along with others, _____."
10. The bottom-line question you're leaving with?

VERSES TO HIDE IN YOUR HEART

- 1 John 4:7–8 — God is love.
- 1 John 4:11 — "if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."
- Romans 12:2 — renewing of your mind.
- Ephesians 4:29 — minister grace to the hearers.
- Ephesians 4:32 — forgive even as God forgave you.
- 1 Corinthians 13:4–5 — what love actually does.

A Prayer to Close

Father, thank You that You are love, and that You loved me right where I was at. I want to know You better, because I know that's the only way Your love is going to show up in me. Renew my mind. Watch over my mouth. Make me quick to forgive and slow to hold on. Help me see people the way You see them — with compassion, with gentleness. I'm a work in progress, and I'm grateful for Your mercy and grace every day. In Jesus' name, amen.

Based on your teaching — "God Is Love / Loving Like God" • 1 John 4 • All Scripture KJV
Frank Wyatt Ministries • "It's Not Too Late"