

Faith Talk - August 9, 2026

Series: 1 John- Life in the Light and Love of God

Sermon: The Love and Fellowship of God

Scripture: 1 John 4:16

And we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and the one who remains in love remains in God, and God remains in him.

Summary

At the heart of our passage, 1 John 4:16-21, sits one of the most profound theological statements in all of Scripture: God is love. John isn't offering a sentimental feeling or a vague philosophical idea; he is grounding our entire Christian identity in the very nature of who God is.

God is love, and He demonstrates what love is at the cross. Even more breathtaking is what this love invites us into: the early church fathers used the Greek word *perichoresis*, a kind of circling or dancing together, to describe the mutual indwelling of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The gospel is God opening the door to that eternal dance and saying, *join us*.

When we remain in His love, we remain on that dance floor and into the deepest fellowship the universe has to offer, the intimacy of the Trinity itself. And something happens to us on that dance floor: fear dissolves. Fear of judgment, fear of punishment, fear of not being enough, fear we don't have enough, all of it is driven out by the love of God we experience in fellowship with Him.

That transformation then flows outward. A person who has truly known and believed God's love cannot help but love others, because the source of our love for one another is our oneness with God. We love because He first loved us.

John's challenge is pointed: if we claim to love God whom we haven't seen while withholding love from the brother or sister we have seen, something is incomplete. The invitation is simple: know and believe God's love, remain in it, and let it overflow into the lives of those dancing alongside you.

Discussion Questions

Conversations with Adults

- John says God defines love; we don't take what our culture defines as love and project that onto God; we look at the cross and let that define love. Where do you see our culture getting that backward, and how does it affect the way people think about God?
- The image of being invited into the dance of the Trinity, the eternal, joyful, self-giving love of the Father, Son, and Spirit is a picture of what fellowship with God actually is. Does that image change anything about how you think about your relationship with God?
- John says if you struggle to love others, don't start with others; start with yourself and go deeper into God's love. What does that actually look like as a next step for someone who is genuinely finding it hard to love a particular person in the church?

Conversations with Students

- John says "God is love" doesn't mean God tolerates everything; it means God's love is holy enough to take sin seriously and pay for it on the cross. How is that different from the way most people use the phrase "God is love" today?
- Have you ever had that feeling of getting something you wanted and still thinking, is this all there is? Where do you usually go looking for something more, and how does what John is saying speak to that?
- John says perfect love drives out fear. What are the fears that most get in the way of you feeling close to God, and does knowing His love actually help with those?

Conversations with Kids

- John says God doesn't just have love — God is love. What's the difference between someone who sometimes acts loving and someone who is just loving all the way through?
- The pastor talked about the Trinity as an eternal dance where God invites us in. What do you think it feels like to be invited into something that wonderful?
- John says we love others because God first loved us. Who is one person in your life that might need to experience God's love through you this week?

Closing Prayer

Father, **thank You** that You are not a God who merely acts loving when it is convenient; You are love, all the way to Your core, and the cross is the proof. Thank You that You didn't keep that love to Yourself but opened the door and invited us in, into the fellowship of the Trinity, into the dance of Your eternal love.

We ask You to make that real to us, not just as a doctrine we believe but as a life we actually live. Drive out every fear with the completeness of Your love, and then let that love spill over into the way we treat one another, especially the people in this church family who are hardest for us to love.

We commit to starting with You, knowing and believing Your love more deeply, trusting that everything else will flow from that. In Jesus' name, Amen.