

The Love Test

1 John 4:1-21 The whole counsel of God's Word exhorts us not to judge others. However, we can give the love test to others. The Bible says you shall know them by their fruits. The fruit of the Spirit is love. John talks about the love test. "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us" (vv. 11-12).

When we see someone who does not walk in love, we can rest assured that person does not know God because God is love. Every day I pray, "Lord, help me to love as You love." His love is gentle, kind, longsuffering, full of faith, joyful, peaceful, patient and self-controlled.

No human being is capable of having love like this, but this love can flow through us if we daily abide in the love of Jesus and His Word. We have to admit honestly to God that without Him we can do nothing; especially we cannot love. He is love (true love), and only as we submit ourselves daily to Him for a fresh infilling of His love will we be able to even begin to love as He loves. The Bible tells us that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. We must depend upon the Holy Spirit to conform us to the image of Jesus daily and to perfect within us the love of Christ. Once we receive a fresh infilling of His Spirit daily, we have to make sure we do not leak. How can we do this? Ephesians 5:18-21 shares the answer. "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God" (KJV).

The above exhortation does not seem to be a tall order. On the contrary, it is quite doable, and if we sing and speak to ourselves in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs and make melody in our hearts, we will be filled not only with the Spirit, but also with His love, peace and joy.

Today, when you are stopped at a traffic light, try singing some of your favorite hymns aloud. The moment you awaken in the morning, read and sing some of the psalms. If you do this faithfully, you will be able to pass the love test. Remember, always it is the love of Jesus within you, not your own love, that will make an impact on others.

Lord, I give You thanks for Your Word that says You will perfect Your love within me. I submit myself to Your Spirit of love today.

**READ: Daniel 11:36-12:13; 1 John 4:1-21; Psalm 123:1-4;
Proverbs 29:2-4**