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You Love God?

Do You Love God?

by Eddie Lawrence

If you want to know if you love God, there are several biblical tests that can be applied. Following is one of them found in 1 John 4. Take the test and see you you do?

1 John 4:20-21 "If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother."

1. Hatred in the Heart Nullifies Loving Words Out the Mouth

"If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar."

-We must ask the Holy Spirit to help us discern the hatred areas of our hearts. We can become self-deceived about the hatred in our hearts. We do this by convincing ourselves we are justified in hating or by thinking we say we 'love someone or forgive them' will override the animosity we seethe with internally.

-God's Word says we are liars when we do this.

-We are acting with Satan's agenda when we do this. He is the father of lies.

2. Brotherly Relationships Reveal the Reality of Heavenly Relationships

"For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen."

-Our love for God is truly gauged by our love for our brothers.

Questions to gauge whether or not there is hatred in the heart toward a brother:

-Are you acting out toward him in hostility?

-Do you secretly plot ways to hurt or discredit him before others?

-Do you engage in accusation toward him?

-Do you say you love him while at the same time your heart despises him?

-Do you think about him continuously with mal-intent in mind?

-What happens in your physical body when you think of him?

-Would you rejoice if bad things happened to him?

-Would you rejoice if good things happened to him?

-Are you anticipating judgment falling upon him because you know God will avenge you?

3. A True Love for God cannot Exist with a true Hatred toward a Brother.

"And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother."

-God's measurement of vertical love toward Him is seen through the measure of horizontal love toward others.

-The validity of our love is in question when we are not loving a brother.

Practical considerations:

-Attempt to reconcile according to Matthew 18. If all attempts have ended in a stall, then keep an open heart and keep praying for God to bless your brother with His grace and mercy. Believe the Lord will open the door for reconciliation to occur. Paul reminds us to live at peace with all men as much as lies within us.

-Be honest about the sin in your own heart. Deal with it. Be humble and confess it to God and those biblically appropriate.

-Seek counsel from others who are outside the "drama" of the personalities involved.

-Refuse to be drawn into the fleshly battle. This is where the enemy is able to do his work.

-Submit to your spiritual authorities and follow their bible based guidance.

-Realize the cross is about forgiving and releasing offenses.

-Remember repentance brings forgiveness to our hearts.

Conclusion: The antidote for hatred is forgiveness, mercy, and love which are all grace gifts God will give us as we need them.

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