

# WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

## *The Church is a Family that Values One Another*

I John 4:7-21

Two weeks ago we considered the subject that the church is a family that cares for one another. Today I want to consider a related topic that has a distinctively different focus: the church is a family that values one another. The distinction is significant and deserves thoughtful consideration. I have selected a text from I John 4:7-21 as illustrative. Both caring for one another and valuing one another are components of agape love, like two sides of a coin.

### I. Distinctive Differences Between "to Care" and "to Value":

- A. **CARE:** to have thought or regard, to make provision or look out for, to worry, to look after, to do things that keep something in good condition
- B. **VALUE:** to hold dear, to regard or esteem highly, to appreciate, prize, treasure.
- C. Some Differences to Consider:

<b>Care</b> Something you do Relationally based Based on need	<b>Value</b> Something you believe Intrinsic worth Based on unique gifts, attributes
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### II. Our Absolute, Objective Value Is Established by God

- A. We are His creation, made in His image, and have intrinsic worth
- B. We are loved by Him and the object of His affection
- C. We have greater value than any other created thing
- D. Our sin nature and sinful behavior does not diminish our value, nor negate our true worth (in fact it proves it)
- E. Our total depravity does not extinguish the image of God in us nor His gifts and attributes manifested through us

### III. Our Relative Value is Demonstrated in Personal Relationships

- A. It is possible to care for someone (to give practical aid) whom you do not value, whom you do not even like...but it makes for a cold, perfunctory relationship.
- B. When we grow to love someone, to value them and to cherish them, it is because we are coming to see God's image in them, their unique beauty and attributes.
- C. John is appealing to the broad spectrum of agape love, both caring and valuing, as he writes I John 4:7-21, especially vv. 7, 11, & 12.
- D. We are called to love one another for the same reasons God loves us (v.11), it is a call to deliberately seek and see in one another:
  1. the manifestation of the image of God: how is he/she like Jesus
  2. the positive attributes and gifts each one uniquely has
  3. the intrinsic worth and value they bring to the church family

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

9 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.

10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

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

12 No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.

13 By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.

14 We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.

15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

16 We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

17 By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world.

18 There is no fear in love;

