

ALL IN THE FAMILY (OF GOD)
#4: The Kingdom Paternity Test
February 3-5, 2007

^{5:1}Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Messiah is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. ²This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. ³In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, ⁴for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. ⁵Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. . . ¹⁸We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the One who was born of God keeps them safe, and the evil one cannot harm them. ¹⁹We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. ²⁰We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

1 John 5:1-5, 18-20 TNIV

^{4:7}Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹²No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. ¹³This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. ¹⁶And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. ¹⁷This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. ¹⁸There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. ¹⁹We love because he first loved us. ²⁰If we say we love God yet hate a brother or sister, we are liars. For if we do not love a fellow believer, whom we have seen, we cannot

love God, whom we have not seen. ²¹And he has given us this command: Those who love God must also love one another.

1 John 4:7-21 TNIV

Introduction: Many people seem to wonder, “How do we know that we are truly God’s children and part of His family?” The answer is found in Scripture and eloquently summarized in John’s first epistle. There is a two-part paternity test that identifies God’s DNA in His children.

- I. Who Are God’s Children?
 - A. EVERYONE who believes that Jesus is God’s Son and loves Christ is born of God. (v.1)
 - B. The children of God are those who overcome the world as part of God’s family. (v.4)
 - C. The children of God are those who have “understanding.” (v.20)
 - II. How Do We Recognize God’s Children?
 - A. The two-part paternity test:
 1. God’s children keep His commandments. (Ch. 4)
 2. God’s children love those in the family. (Ch. 5)
 - B. The children of God demonstrate their love for the Father by living according to His commandments, which are not a burden but a benefit. (vv. 4:2-3)
 - C. Therefore, the children of God do not continue in sin and are thus kept safe from the evil one. (vv.18-19)
 - D. The children of God are those who love their brothers and sisters in Christ’s body with God’s love; this is the true sign of the abiding Holy Spirit. (vv. 5:7-21)
 - E. The children of God are the presence of Jesus in the world, demonstrating the power of love. (vv. 5:17-18)
 - III. Who First Gave the Test?
 - A. Jesus first gave the paternity test. (Matthew 22:37-40)

Jesus replied: “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”
 - B. Children of God are those who pass the Jesus test.
- Conclusion: We can know that we are children of God and part of His very own family if we pass the test: live according to His rules and love His children. This is the whole of the Gospel, and there is no other test. We have Jesus’ DNA or we don’t.