love, needs, caring, agape, eros
1 John 4:7-11
God’s love meets our needs and moves us beyond them.

INTRODUCTION: (text read as Scripture reading)
–The Valentine’s Day symbol is a heart: the symbol used for the word “love” (“I heart you”.... “You always heart the one you love.”] Silly pun, but the real phrase (with “hurt”) is often true. Why? Because love can be selfishly dominated by our own neediness. That why the Title....
–In C. S. Lewis’ intro to The Four Loves: “need” love is the usual definition, but “gift” love is rooted in God (“God is love”– HOM.idea)

I. Needing is Not Nasty!
A. Our need for love is not mere selfishness, unless it’s overindulged.
B. Needing to be loved is part of God’s blessing on humanity:
   a. OT– Psa 81:10, I am the LORD your God, who brought you up out of Egypt. Open wide your mouth and I will fill it. (Our soul’s hunger)
   b. NT– Mat 11:28, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” (Our need for refreshment from weariness)
3. We approach God from a sense of need: He’s full, we’re empty; He’s sovereign, we’re dependent; He’s righteous, we’re sinful; He’s powerful, we’re weak; He’s wise, we’re often foolish.
C. It’s part of our journey, part of being who we are:
   a. We’re human because made in God’s image (no choice about it)
   2. But having free will, means acting like God’s image is voluntary.
   3. Our need is obvious: we can’t image our Maker independently.
      a. We fail to be truly human by choosing independence from God (The Incarnation [God becoming human] wasn’t to show us how to be like God [Satan’s deception] but how to be true humans, real images of God, who personally reflect His love.)
      b. Our need is to obey Christ’s command: “Follow Me,” but we can’t do that, unless He indwells us through the Holy Spirit.

TRANS: Need love is not nasty. It draws us to our ultimate need of a
who have their sons with them, in Hell? Does their love make them happy?"

“If you mean people like the Guthrie woman and her dreadful Bobby, of course not.... Don’t you dare to suggest that Michael could ever become like the Guthrie boy. There are some things I won’t stand.”

“What you have seen in the Guthries is what natural affection turns to in the end if it will not be converted.”

“It’s a lie. A wicked, cruel lie. How could anyone love their son more than I did? Haven’t I lived only for his memory all these years?”

“That was rather a mistake, Pam. In your heart of hearts you know it was.”

–C. S. Lewis was capturing *what mother-love could become without...*

**III. The Meeting of Need-Love by Gift-Love**

A. It’s “not good to be alone,” but can we live with other needy people?  
(Needs hurt, when unfulfilled: they can harm ourselves & others, because humans don’t meet our deepest need for need-fulfilment.)

B. **God’s love alone meets our needs...**

1. **v.8.** Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.  
   [Recall the pop song: “What the world needs now is love, sweet love...”] [Here’s a logical syllogism: “We need love; God is love; therefore, we need God!”]

2. **v.9-10.** This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. (*Needing isn’t the problem; we need the sin taken out of our needing; only God’s sacrificial gift in Christ can do that.*)

C. **God’s love meets our needs... and moves us beyond them...**

1. **v.11.** Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.  
   (God didn’t plan for life to run on need-loves, but on gift-love.)

2. **v.7.** ...let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. – What’s the secret of true love?
   a. **True love** is really gift-love and only “comes from God.”
   b. **True love** begins by being “born of God.”  
      [What about loving people who reject God’s love? Making human love an idol that pushes away love’s Creator is a catastrophe more tragic than lust, because, it’s more blinding.]
   c. **True love** “knows God” (knows its Source) and it grows stronger by knowing God more and more intimately, through Christ.

**CONCLUSION:** Jesus came to show us God’s love and to show us how to love. “God is love,” and because we’re made in Love’s image, our true humanity is fulfilled by loving and serving others. So, let’s let God meet our need-love and move us beyond it to gift-love for others.