

LOVE



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## Themes of Advent

- Refocus on Truth
- Renew Perspective & Meaning
- Re-align Priorities & Plans
- Response in Celebration
  - worship our God & his Love extended



# LOVE

## 1. God's Love Towards Us

- need to be reminded of this often
- a) Steadfast and Abounding
- Exodus 34:6 “The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands.”



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- Psalm 36:7 “How precious is your steadfast love, O God! The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings.”
- Eph 2:4-8 “But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God



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## b) Motivation

- John 3:16-18 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.”



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## 2. Jesus – the Demonstration of This Love

a) Humbled Himself & Came to Us

- Phil. 2:5-8 “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”



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## b) Extended to Us – Not Earned or Deserved

- Romans 5:6-9 “For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person — though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die — but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.”



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## c) Loving Us Caused Pain

- rejection and betrayal
- saw some turn away from Salvation
- wept at the human condition
- bore our punishment on himself
- John 15:12-13 “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.”





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## 3. This Love Demands a Response

a) Accepting it personally

- Romans 10:9-11 “because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. For the Scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.”



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## b) New priorities in life

- Matthew 22:37-39 “And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”
- John 13:35 “By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”



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- c) Ever Growing in Love & Understanding
  - Rom. 5:5 “and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.”
  - 2 Thess. 3:5 “May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ.”



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- Eph. 3:16-19 “that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith — that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”



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## SO WHAT?

1. Christmas is a celebration of Christ's Birth
  - Gods provision for mankind
  - love on display in a manger
  - Knowing why God did this changes response
2. Celebrate and Worship Differently
  - ponder a love that would do this
  - ponder a problem requiring this response
  - ponder how to express response



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## SO WHAT?

### 3. Give Voice to Your Celebration

- others need to see and hear
- choose your symbols and celebrations
- mark this incredible moment

### 4. Allow God to examine your heart and Love

- are you extending this towards others
- seek the work of the Holy Spirit to give growth in this area

