

Season of Advent – Week 4

“The Love of Christmas – 1 John 4:9-10”

Intro.

- V.7-8 – The reason we’re given the example of God’s love in these verses is to know how we’re supposed to love one another.

I. The love of Christmas – 1 John 4:9-10

A. V.9 – *“In this the love of God was manifest toward us...”*

- 1) In this = this is how
- 2) The love of God = Not the love of man – John 14:27.
 - a) *Human love, even though sincere, is fickle: we don’t always love consistently, compassionately, completely. It has limits.*
 - b) **God’s love** is never ending, never failing, never changing = Jer. 31:3 – Everlasting (Heb.) = always.
 - i) His love isn’t contingent upon our performance.
 - ii) His love isn’t contingent upon our circumstances.
 - iii) His love isn’t contingent upon our emotions.
- 3) Was manifest (to reveal; to make known) toward (in = fixed in position or place) us = if God didn’t reveal (His) love to us, we would still be ignorant of it.
 - a) Love isn’t natural for any of us. Our natural instinct is anything but loving – Gal. 5:17-23; Eph. 2:1-3.

B. **How did God manifest His love to us? He demonstrated it...**

- 1) *“... that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world...”*
 - a) **True love is active**, not merely sentimental – John 3:16;
“God loved; God gave; God sent”

b) **True love is sacrificial** – 1 John 3:16; John 3:16; 10:11; 15:13; Rom. 5:6-8.

- i) *Various reasons for giving a gift: love; generosity; to meet a need...many times that can't be met on our own.*
- ii) *God gave us His Son out of love because we have a need we can never meet: eternal life; salvation – Is. 64:5-6; Col. 2:13-15.*

c) **True love is valuable** – “...*God has sent His only begotten Son (begotten – unique one; sole representative) into the world*”.

- i) *Are we willing to give anything & everything, like God, to demonstrate our love for God?*
 - aa) God gave away His Son; His eternal comfort; His presence with His heavenly Father:
 - bb) *“For the Son of God to empty Himself and become poor meant a laying aside of glory; a voluntary restraint of power; an acceptance of hardship, isolation, ill-treatment, malice and misunderstanding. Finally, a death that involved such agony; spiritual even more than physical, that His mind nearly broke under the prospect of it. It meant love to the uttermost for unlovely men.” – J.I.Packer*
- ii) *The greatest gifts aren't necessarily the ones that cost the giver the most financially, but the ones they hold dearest to their own soul. Jesus, the Son, was the expression of the love of His Father – 2 Cor. 8:9.*

d) **True love is proactive** – v.10, 19.

- i) *God's love isn't static, but takes the initiative to redeem.*

C. **Why did God manifest His love to us?**

- 1) *“that we might live through Him”* = left in our natural, sinful, unlovable state we are destined for death – Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:1-9; 1 John 3:5, 8; 5:12.
- 2) **Jesus was sent *“to be the propitiation for our sins.”***
 - a) Propitiation = atonement; appeasement; satisfaction – Col. 1:20; 1 Pet. 2:24.
 - b) Septuagint uses Gr. word *“propitiation”* anywhere *“atonement”* appears.
 - c) Heb. for atonement comes from a root meaning **to cover**.
 - i) **Rom. 3:25 – Lit. *“mercy seat”*** – in the temple in O.T. where the blood of the sacrifice was splattered by the High Priest on the Day of Atonement – Lev. 16:15.
 - ii) *Jesus Christ is our mercy seat; sent to be the blood covering for our sins...this is the love of Christmas!*