

Advent #4 - Love

We are called to love like God, and from God.

1 John 4:7-17 (NLT) - Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. ⁸But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. ¹⁰This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. ¹¹Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. ¹²No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us. ¹³And God has given us his Spirit as proof that we live in him and he in us. ¹⁴Furthermore, we have seen with our own eyes and now testify that the Father sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world. ¹⁵All who declare that Jesus is the Son of God have God living in them, and they live in God. ¹⁶We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love. God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them. ¹⁷And as we live in God, our love grows more perfect. So we will not be afraid on the day of judgment, but we can face him with confidence because we live like Jesus here in this world.

Love like God

1 John 4:7-10 (above)

Matthew 22:37-39 (NLT) - Jesus replied, “You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. ³⁸This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹A second is equally important: Love your neighbor as yourself.”

John 3:16 (NLT) - “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.”

And from God

1 John 4:16-17 (above)

Study Guide

We spoke this week about what it means to love like God and from God. Let’s talk about that a bit more. Take a moment to read John 15. Make some notes on what stands out to you about love in this chapter. What stands out to you in this chapter? One of the lines that sticks out to me is when Jesus says: This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you.

When you think about how Jesus loved the disciples and how he loves us, how would you describe it?

It is always interesting to me that Jesus transitions from talk about loving others, to how the world will hate the disciples. He is showing them that they should not expect to be accepted just because they love others. If anything, the world will reject them more because of the way they love, because it will seem foreign to them.

Have you ever experienced a bad reaction to loving someone? How did that experience feel? Does it match the warning Jesus gives here?

We are called to love because of who God is and what He has for us, not because of how it will be received. If you have found some success in living through difficulty, please share that with your group.

Take some time to pray for each other that God would expand our ability to love.