

Finding Love in Present Times

Love is a simple concept, yet our world has made it complex. Today's Advent topic is finding love in present times.

Introduction

Today, we continue the celebration of Advent by talking about Love this Christmas. When we started Advent 3 weeks ago, we spoke about peace, then we went on to talk about hope. If you were with us last week, we shared about joy this Christmas.

As you can see, there is one more candle to light to conclude the celebration of Advent. That special candle is the Jesus candle. This is when we read the entire Christmas story, and the celebration of the Savior being born takes place. Next Sunday is Christmas Day, we will have all the candles lit as we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

Love is a simple concept, yet our world has made it complex. Many songs on the radio in every genre talk about love. The world defines love as a feeling two people have for one another in a romantic relationship. Or how a person feels about a family member. Some of the ways the world defines love are simplistic by describing how much a person really likes something, for instance, "I love chocolate, or love basketball". However, all these definitions are incorrect of what love truly is. Love is defined in the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Love is a great summation leading up to Christmas. Love is what Christmas is all about. Love is what God displayed 2000 years ago when He sent his son to be born in a manger. Without love, we would not have Christmas. Without love we would not have hope.

What Love Is

Love plays such an integral part in our lives that people will spend their entire lives trying to find it, replace it, and even create it.

1 John 4:7-12 tells us plainly what love is:

1 John 4:7-12

(7) Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. (8) Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. (9) 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. (10) This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. (11) Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. (12) No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

God displayed the greatest act of love when He sent his son to live a sinless life and be rejected, ridiculed, and ultimately sacrificed. This son, his only son, would die to save the world from sin so that we could be reconciled back to God. This is true love.

Verse 8 tells us that God is love. He is the definition of love.



We can learn more about God's character of love when we read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

(4) Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. (5) It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. (6) Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. (7) It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. (8) Love never fails.

God created love because that is his identity, He is love. It makes no sense to us as to why a parent would willingly allow their child to be tortured and sacrificed for someone else; let alone, the entire world. But that was God's plan when he sent his son, Jesus to be born to lowly people, in a humble place so many years ago. This selfless act made the way for you and me to have a relationship with him.

It is this love that was displayed and continues to be displayed that we can celebrate today. God loves us so much that he gave us his son. He chose to display his love for us by sending his son to us as the greatest gift and illustration of grace.

No matter what we do, we cannot do anything to separate us from his love. God is love; it is his nature. No matter what we think, say, or act, God will still love us. We can try to run from him and even lash out at him. We can even attempt to deny his existence and choose to believe lies about him; it does not change the fact he still loves us.

Finding Love Today

God is love. That is why the world looks in all the wrong places to find love. They deny the existence of a loving Creator so they rely on their own understanding; love must be an emotion, something that can be felt. We learn by the scriptures we read today that love just is, because God is. Love is an action, not an emotion. Love is being Christlike, having patience, showing kindness, being selfless, not dishonoring others, keeping no record of wrongs, forgiving, and so on.

Today, you can find love in a relationship with Jesus Christ, God's son. The baby that was born to the virgin Mary 2000 years ago who became the Savior of the world.

Romans 8:38-39 tells us that nothing we can say or do will keep God from loving us.

Romans 8:38-39

(38) For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, (39) neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We cannot run from God, we cannot think him away, we cannot do anything that will separate us from his love. He loves us so deeply that he has created a way for us to have a relationship with him. This baby, whose birth we celebrate on Christmas Day, would be the one to pay the price for our sin so that we can have a relationship with God.

It is this deep love that we celebrate at Christmas, this advent of Christ coming to Earth in the form of a little baby to grow up living a sinless life, so he could take on our sin. Because of that selfless act of love, we can have life and experience the true meaning of love in present times.



Conclusion

Do not listen to and believe the world's definition of love. The right relationship, the right family life, the right friend, will not bring you a place of true love. Only God can help you experience what love really is.

This love is displayed to us in grace. Grace is not getting what we deserve. Our sin deserves death but Christ paid that price so we can live eternally with him in Heaven. This love is for you, and it is for me. All you must do is accept the sacrifice that Jesus made for you on the cross by confessing your sin to him and asking for forgiveness. That is it, just saying "yes" to Jesus and accepting him as Lord and Savior is what Christmas is all about.

Love is why we celebrate Jesus' Birthday. Jesus was no ordinary baby. Sure, he crawled, took his first steps, and had to learn to read and write. But Jesus is God in human form. He loves you so much. That is the true beauty of Christmas. This Christ child is our Messiah and when you have accepted him, you have found love in present times!

