

God's Storehouse Bible Study #36

12/23/2025 – “LOVE!”

John 3:16, Lamentations 3:22-23, 1 Corinthians 13, Isaiah 49:15-16, 1 Corinthians 15:55-57, Matthew 22:39

Advent: A season of waiting and preparing for the celebration of Jesus' birth, or of His 2nd coming. The word comes from the Latin , word “adventus”, which means “coming”, or “arrival”. Christians practice 4 weeks of Advent, leading up to Christmas: **Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.**

LOVE! The 4th week of Advent is the culmination of the 3 preceding weeks of Hope, Peace, and Joy. It is usually recognized by the purple or pink candle, sometimes referred to as the “Angel’s Candle”. It points to the angel’s first announcement to the shepherds of “*peace, goodwill toward men*”. **Nothing would have been possible if not for God’s tremendous love for us, culminated by the ultimate act of love.**

What is Love? There have traditionally been 4 different kinds of love identified:

1. Agape: Unconditional, sacrificial, love for all.
2. Philia: Deep friendship, brotherly love.
3. Storge: Familial, natural affection
4. Eros: Romantic, passionate love.

There are also 2 other kinds of love sometimes referred to: Philautia – a healthy love of oneself (we must love ourselves before we can love others: Matthew 22:39), and Pragma – an enduring, lasting love.

God’s love is of course epitomized by the attitude of agape love, but all kinds of love are worthy and should be pursued. Unfortunately, the world (Satan’s domain), has allowed many different and misleading uses of the word “love”, especially regarding eros (erotic) love.

There are 322 verses in the bible that contain the word love. Even when the word “love” is not written, it is shown throughout the Bible.

John 3:16: **“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have**

everlasting live.” This is one of the most recognizable verses in the Bible, and can often be repeated by believers and non-believers alike. A commentary by David Guzik breaks down this verse into “7 wonders”:

1. God: Almighty authority!
2. So loved the world: Mightiest motive. God did not just sit back and watch his creation, He wants to be involved in every aspect of it! He loved us when we did not love Him!
3. That He gave His only begotten Son: The greatest gift ever given, never to be matched or exceeded.
4. That whoever: Widest welcome!
5. Believes in him: Easiest escape when we trust, rely on, and cling to Jesus!
6. Should not perish: Divine deliverance! **1 Corinthians 15:55-57**: Death has been defeated!
7. But have everlasting life: Priceless possession! **Lamentations 3:22-23** – it is new every morning!

Isaiah 49:15-16: Even a nursing mother might fail to have love for their offspring, but God will never forget, He has written our names on the palms of His hands!! God has really large hands!!

1 Corinthians 13: Often referred to as the “Love Chapter”. Paul is writing to the church at Corinth, who worshiped the Greek god Athena (or Aphrodite), based wholly on an immoral type of love. Paul describes in detail the agape love shown by God, and the kind of love we should strive to practice. The 13th verse is the ultimate message: faith is very important, hope is very important, **but the greatest is love! All other things are going to be lacking if you don’t first have love; it is the “glue” that holds everything together. This is the love that came to earth in the form of the baby Jesus on that 1st Christmas!**

John 13:34-35: **“A new commandment I give you, that you love one another as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”** Note that this is a command, not a choice. The command to love wasn’t new, but the extent of

who we must love was. Jesus commands us to love “as I have loved you”. That is setting a very high standard! This especially speaks to fellow Christians, as our obvious love for each other should set the example for the rest of the world. In seeing us, they should see the same kind of love that Jesus displayed.

Applying Love to Christmas:

- God sent Love to earth in the form of the baby Jesus, showing the ultimate sacrifice. Not only that He would die a horrible death on the cross, but also that He would suffer all the pains of life that we as humans go through during His 33 years on this earth.
- God’s love doesn’t fade away. It doesn’t come and go. It doesn’t leave you when you’ve failed Him! It is not like the “love” often shown in this world.
- We should try to practice true agape love: unconditional, sacrificial, and for all.
- Carry the spirit of Christmas, and the love that Jesus brought with Him, throughout the year!