



# Advent Love

John 3:16-21  
Week of December 19, 2021

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Before Connect Group

- John 3:16-21
  - Watch the sermon by going to <http://switzerlandcommunitychurch.org>
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*“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 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. 18 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. 19 And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil. 20 For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. 21 But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been carried out in God.”*

*John 3:16-21, ESV*

# Sermon Notes

*The definition of what is good for you is what you endure when you are in Christ.  
Christ is the most Glorified in the work of the Cross*

As we spend time building our adoration of Jesus, we must find ourselves speaking most centrally about love. I think I could speak for most in this room this morning that our true desire is to love Christ. So as we enter the text, I want to clearly state that the ultimate way we understand how to adore Christ this Christmas is by looking intently at the way he has loved us. This is why I have chosen John 3:16-21 this morning. Here in this text we are dealing with a central and beautiful declaration of the height of God's love toward the world.

## The Method and Madness of the Love of God

- John 3:16

### Method: Imagery of Moses in the Desert

- "For" at the beginning of this text indicates to us that we are describing in further detail something that preceded.
- In this case, it is vs. 14-15 right above (read these)
- John is clearly pointing us to imagery that is to help us think about the reason God is sending His son.
- *Numbers 21:4-9 From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom. And the people became impatient on the way. And the people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this worthless food." Then the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. And the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you. Pray to the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live." So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.*
- The heart of this imagery, is that there is no other way. When you are steeped in this narrative in Numbers, you realize that there is no option for those who are snakebit other than to wait for death. Without supernatural intersection, there is no hope for ongoing life.
- There are so many in this world, even Christians who are working their tails off in order to manage their death. Stop looking for the answers elsewhere, that is just managing death. Rather, look to the only one who can turn your death into life.

### Madness: The "World"

- This madness is one of humanly, fleshly standards but is perfect love in the eyes of God
- God's intent to send Christ into the World and ultimately send Him to the Cross was a plan that fulfilled all time.
- *Ephesians 1:9-10 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.*
- The madness that I speak of is the Love of God to the whole "world".
- Many will try to limit this world for theological reasons, but I am not interested in the slightest with that this morning.
- John's concern is the full consumption of Christ and the "world" becomes a very

important word to help him communicate that in his Gospel.

- The whole was made through him, and he has the right to bring children from any part of the “world” -
- *John 1:9-13 The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.*
- The confession of John the Baptist -
- *John 1:29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!*
- The Samaritan Woman story... the Samaritans
- *John 4:39-42 Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me all that I ever did.” So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.”*
- This advent of Christ, which carries in its view the entire work of Christ, is the pinnacle of the display and effect of God’s love over all creation.
- This is the great contrast that should fill our hearts and minds. The quiet, innocent, and vulnerable birth of this baby boy was the most dominate, invasive, central piece to God’s redemptive plan set out from all time.
- God has blessed each one of us with the full knowledge of the salvation of Christ this Christmas. You get to celebrate with the full joy of worship in the Glory of God’s presence.

## **The Purpose of the Love of God**

- John 3:17
- When God sent His only Son, he did so in order that we might not experience the condemnation that is already upon us.
- Sins entrance into the world brought condemnation.
- *Genesis 2:15 -17 The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”*
- The coming of the Son of God to the world would naturally be the coming of final judgement and condemnation of all of those in sin.
- The Jews who were listening to Jesus would not have been surprised if Jesus would have said, the son of God came to immediately condemn the World.
- The assumption was that it meant everyone but the Jews. Because they had the promises.
- The shock was that he did “not” come in to condemn the world. He came that they might have life rather than death.
- The celebration of the birth of Christ, is intimately attached to the proclamation that anyone who comes to him can experience the life from death salvation that is promised and prophesied to the Jews in the OT.
- This becomes the foundation of the great commission in the Gospels. “Go into all the nations.”

- How are we celebrating this truth this Christmas? Is this a time for us to isolate and worship quietly? Or is this a time for us to declare the salvation promise to the most unlikely. Namely, the ones you may think do not deserve it at all.
- There may be someone whom you would expect God to show up and condemn them, but the truth of the Christmas story is that the baby Jesus came for the very opposite.
- With all of that said, we cannot leave out the rest of this section.

## The Result of the Love of God

- The ultimate clarity of the love of God to salvation, also brings ultimate clarity of judgement.
- This is very important for us to understand. In the birth of Jesus, we are blessed with clear revelation of God and his love.
- *John 1:1-5 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*
- *John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*
- But as the love of God becomes clear, so does the condemnation and judgement on sin.
- John's contrast is so stark in this revelation of love and its determination of salvation or condemnation through belief, that there are no lost sheep in the Gospel of John.
- *Matthew 10:5-7 These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And proclaim as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'*
- *Matthew 15:24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."*
- *Luke 15:3-6 So he told them this parable: "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost."*
- For John, you are either in the flock of God and following Him or you are not his sheep.
- *John 10:22-30 At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon. So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me, but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. 30 I and the Father are one."*
- Your celebration of the love of God coming into the world this Christmas could likely bring controversy with others.
- Because of the love of darkness. (19)
- Fear of the light. (20)

The adoration we have this Christmas season is defined by the love and adoration that God himself has had toward us. The words of 1 John fill out our understanding. *1 John 4:19 We love because he first loved us.* Come to the light this Christmas. We celebrate the birth of Christ, because we see clearly the Love of God in Him!

# Connect Group Discussion Questions

- How do the ways of the world differ from the ways of the Lord? Why are they described as madness? What is one place you see the love of the world in stark contrast to the love of God?
- What does it reveal about the love of God that the light took on flesh and came into the world? What does this tell us about God's affection towards His people?
- Does mankind stand condemned by their own actions? What is the consequences of our sin? What is the relationship between why Jesus Christ came and our sin?
- Why do people stray to the darkness? What are some of the things we stray towards as a people who constantly forget the Gospel?
- Describe how the coming of Jesus Christ into the world is an act of love? Why should we celebrate the coming of love even though it may attract controversy?
- Where have you felt the impact of God's love the most in your life?

## Challenge For The Week

The love of God comes so that God may be glorified in all the world regardless of what the world may think of God. We love because God first loved us.

- Think through your own spiritual journey. When did you pass from death to life? From darkness to light? Share your story with a friend this week?
- You have been placed where you are to impact the world for the sake of the Gospel. Who do you know that needs to hear this Gospel of Love? What opportunities do you have to share the Gospel with them this week?

