

Advent: A Season of Expectation
Looking Forward to Love
John 1:14-18; 3:14-18

Humanity has been caught in an awkward struggle between religion and relationship ever since the battle between good and evil became a conscious reality. Religion has been man's efforts to itemize actions that would help them achieve goodness and restore the connection with their Creator. We desperately need that connection, that relationship, but every religious effort on our part seems to fall short of what it takes to get there.

1. God loves us enough to display His glory through Jesus.

2. God loves us enough to extend His grace through Jesus.

3. God loves us enough to offer His gift through Jesus.

With all of the pageantry and busyness, it is easy to lose the gospel at Christmas. We celebrate rightly the love of God that came down to earth, but we need to remember that the ultimate display of this love was not in a manger or a cradle. The ultimate display of God's love is seen in the cross of Calvary and when we experience the fullness of the forgiveness of sins through the cross, the only proper response is to worship not only Christ, our Love, but Christ, our King.

Reflection

Set aside some time to read 1 John in one sitting (about 15-20 minutes is all it will take). Really take some time to meditate on the key components of chapter 4. Think about the significance of God's initiative and subsequent demonstration of love for you. What do you think it means to love one another? What do you think it means to love your neighbor? Do you place conditions on your love? Do they have to earn it? Do they have to think like you in order to experience it? Do you think you earned Christ's love because your actions and thoughts were already similar to His actions and thoughts? Who in your spheres of influence needs to know the love of Jesus? Who will see that type of love in you?