

ADVENT: This is Love

By: Pastor Timothy Corder

This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

This is the Christmas season the last Sunday of Advent before the celebration. And I don't want us to meditate on the unconditional love we would attempt to have for a new born baby. One who is helpless to do anything for them self; feed, clothe or even clean up after themselves, yet we would take the moral high ground and love that baby anyway.

I believe this kind of love is innate; that is, most of us are actually born with this capability. We have it written on the tablets of our hearts. Love the helpless, be kind to the underdog, and even take care of one who will grow to appreciate all we have done for them. We are not going to talk about Jesus the baby in a manger this morning, but rather the Jesus who set down with Father in Heaven and agreed to fulfill the plan to express their love for their creation, humanity by spreading out his arms and loving us this much!!!

It's all about Jesus; it's all about the love God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Spirit has for us. It's about that command to Hope that I preached on a few weeks back the command to Hope fully in grace. It's all about what his love can do for us not what our love can do for him, or even us!

As recipients of His Love and grace of God, we need to be careful to be the right kind of recipient. Can one receive the Grace-of-God which is his unmerited favor-Love and not respond properly? I glad you asked.

Luke 17: 11 Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. 12 As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance 13 and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!"

14 When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed.

15 One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. 16 He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan.

17 Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? 18 Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?" 19 Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

So it would appear that not only can one receive the grace/Love of God and not respond properly, but that it is the overwhelming recorder method of which they do! 9 out of 10. Matthew 7:13-14 [The Narrow and Wide Gates] "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many

enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

So one very important way to know if you are entering into a very narrow way laid out for true followers who will receive Life, is this since of gratitude for grace! You might further wonder can one really receive the forgiveness of God and lack this attitude of gratitude, again good question from the gallery.

Mathew 18: 32 (What the Kingdom of God is like) "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. 33 Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' 34 In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

35 "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

As recipients of the Love of we need to be sure we exhibit an attitude of gratitude.

2ndly we need to do the same for others as the Lord has done for us.

1 John 4:17 This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. 18 There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

19 We love because he first loved us. 20 Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. 21 And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.

Share because you care: share with other because you care for God; for God has placed his image on humanity, not just Jewish humanity, not just white, black, Asian but all of humanity. Share because you care for your brothers and sisters on the globe, but even more with the house hold of faith because they illuminate His image.

Would you even recognize if you were one of the 9 out of 10 who acknowledge you great need from God but failed to show your gratitude?

1 John 5:3 In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome,

2 John 1:6

And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love.