



Love

— IN BEAVERTON —

Pursued by Love

In 1 John 4, the writer claims that God is love. It's not simply that He loves us, although He does, but that He *is* love. God—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is not a committee. As hard as it is for us to grasp, the one true God is himself a community of love—what we Christians call The Trinity. As Father, Son, and Spirit, God's most attractive perfection defines loving relationship and beloved community. Even better, God is generous in His love.

We know about love, we experience it, because Father, Son, and Spirit share it—first with one another and then as it overflows to all creation. However, it's hard to love an abstraction like the Trinity. It can't hold you, cry with you, or laugh at your jokes. For that, you need a person. So God sends such a Person, His only Son, Jesus. We can know Him. We can feel the power of His personality in the stories the Gospels tell. We hear the sharp crack of His wit when He goes head-to-head with the religious leaders of His day who knew the Law but did not know God. We feel His compassion when He lifts a weary sinner from the dust at His feet. And we cry with Him at the insult of death outside Lazarus' tomb.

Jesus identifies with us. He is our advocate. The things we experience as humans aren't something foreign to our God. He's tasted the sweat of His labors, and moreover, the pain at the extreme edge of His love for us. Over the manger lay the shadow of a tree, the place where love came down and hung there for us.

DAILY READINGS & PRAYER:

DEC 22: 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7 Love is difficult to define but we know it when we see it, when we feel it. We can even describe it in action as Paul did. The qualities of love are enormously attractive, especially as they're expressed in Jesus.

Pray for those who have experienced a cheap imitation of love more often than not. Pray for them to notice and embrace God's true love for them.

DEC 23: JOHN 3:16 God loved a world that largely held Him in contempt, or ignored Him completely. He was willing to suffer unrequited love for the sake of that same world so that He might redeem us with a gift beyond measure.

Please pray for someone you know who has been unlovely and unlovable of late. Pray that their heart would soften as the tender love of God breaks in upon them.

DEC 24: 1 JOHN 4:7-11 Love never forces itself on anyone. Even God Sent His one and only Son into the world so that we *might* live through Him. He did not send Jesus so that we *must* do so. We are not forced to love God or to live with Him. We are simply invited to return His embrace.

Declare that those who you love, and have been praying for, will receive a powerful revelation of God's love for them this Christmas.

DEC 25: LUKE 2:1-7 "The time came for the baby to be born." It would be easy to read that part of Luke's story and think nine months but the timeline was in centuries. Jesus Advent was a love worth waiting for and it arrived precisely as God intended.

Pray for those who need to know that God's timing is neither too late or too soon. Pray that the Spirit of Jesus is present to them at precisely the right time.

Loving the Least



All babies need love. But they also need food, diapers, wipes and clothes. Road to Hope is a ministry that provides love and support for new moms and their babies. The ministry provides a stable, secure and nurturing place to live for any young women aged 18 and up who is expecting and up to a year after the child is born.

This ministry partner is dedicated to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ while serving young women, regardless of their faith background. They model God's love while teaching grace, love, respect, honesty, and parenting.

Every young woman in the Road to Hope community receives

comprehensive services to help her prepare for the birth of her baby and plan for parenting or adoption after birth. These include access to prenatal care, education, employment, financial training, childbirth preparation, and counseling. Our church partners with this ministry by providing love, encouragement, and supplies for new babies.

You can help these young moms by giving during our B4 Advent offering. Every dollar received supports this ministry and others like it that we work with, both near and far. To give, write "B4 Advent" on your check. If you'd rather give on-line, simply select "B4 Advent."