

Advent week 4 Outline

I. Introduction: The Greatest Love Story

- A. John 3:16 - Opening verse
- B. Christmas stories pale in comparison
- C. The story begins with "For God so loved the world"
- D. The Candle of Love - final week of Advent
- E. The manger as manifestation of love made visible

II. A Father's Love

- A. Before Bethlehem - eternal unity
- B. John 10:30 - "I and the Father are one"
- C. Galatians 4:4 - "The fullness of time"
- D. Not sentimental affection, but sacrificial decision

III. A Mother and Son's Love

- A. Mary's obedience
- B. Luke 2:35 - Simeon's prophecy
- C. Divine love walks through pain
- D. The path of love passes through sacrifice

IV. The Incarnation: Love Became Flesh

- A. John 1:14 - "The Word became flesh"
- B. The Nicene Creed description
- C. "Dwelt" (eskēnōsen) - pitched His tent
- D. God in humble surroundings

E. Love born into a broken world

V. True Love Transforms the Unworthy

- A. Jesus loved society's rejected
- B. Not overlooking sin, but overcoming it
- C. Divine love changes who we are
- D. Isaac Watts' "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"

VI. Agapē Love: The Highest Form

- A. Definition: selfless, unconditional, covenant love
- B. Based on choice, not emotion
- C. Romans 5:8 - God demonstrates His love
- D. From swaddling clothes to Calvary

VII. Love Entering a Starving World

- A. The Roman Empire's Pax Romana
- B. Peace by fear and force vs. peace by mercy
- C. Pax Christi - peace born of love
- D. A King who came to serve, not rule

VIII. The Personal Dimension of God's Love

- A. Love meant for individuals, not just masses
- B. John as "the disciple whom Jesus loved"
- C. Identity defined by who loves us
- D. How this truth changes everything

IX. The Real Reason for the Season

- A. God's love for us
- B. Not just general love, but personal love
- C. You are the reason for the Incarnation

X. Application: Reflecting Christ's Love

A. Receive His Love

- 1. John 3:16
- 2. Romans 5:8
- 3. Romans 10:9-10
- 4. Salvation is simple but not easy

B. Return His Love

- 1. Worship with grace-captured heart
- 2. Ephesians 2:8-9

C. Reveal His Love

- 1. Love others through actions
- 2. John 13:35

XI. Conclusion: Love Conquers Death

- A. All other love stories end in separation
- B. The greatest love story conquered death
- C. The empty tomb
- D. Love has triumphed