

Advent
Your Love Came Down
Sunday, December 4, 2022

1 John 4: 9-18 NLT

⁹God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. ¹⁰This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. ¹¹Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. ¹²No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us. ¹³And God has given us his Spirit as proof that we live in him and he in us. ¹⁴Furthermore, we have seen with our own eyes and now testify that the Father sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵All who declare that Jesus is the Son of God have God living in them, and they live in God. ¹⁶We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love.

God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them. ¹⁷And as we live in God, our love grows more perfect. So we will not be afraid on the day of judgment, but we can face him with confidence because we live like Jesus here in this world. ¹⁸Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear.

1. **Jesus' Birth is the Manifestation of God's True Love.** Do you fully receive God's love? Are there areas you resist His perfect love?
2. **Loving Others Brings the Full Expression of God's Love.** Is there anyone you are withholding love from? Open yourself as a vessel for His love to freely flow through. Remove all barriers.
3. **Live in God and Grow More Perfect in Love.** Where can you draw more closely to God to let His perfect love fill and guide you?

Conclusion: Love's pure light came down from heaven, in the form of a baby to later become a sacrifice and salvation unto all the world. Let us receive the fullness of God's love for it is His greatest gift, through His Son Jesus. Let us *really love* others as Christ loves them and bring the full expression of God's love into this world.

LIFE GROUP LESSON
Your Love Came Down
Week of December 4- December 10, 2022

Ice Breaker: Has your understanding of God's love evolved? How?

Read 1 John 4: 9-18.

1. As we prepare to celebrate Christmas, why is it important for us to understand the significance of Jesus' birth? (v.9)
2. What is real love? (v.10)
3. What is different about God's love vs. love we share with others?
4. Why was it necessary to take away our sins?
5. What does God desire most with us, His creation?
6. Can we be in relationship with God, in our sinful nature? Why not?
7. While God desires relationship with us, who else are we called to be in relationship with? (v.11) What kind of relationship?
8. What are we told in v. 12?
9. How is God's love brought to full expression in us as we love others?
10. What is the proof given to us by God that we live in Him? (v.13)
11. What is required to have the love of God living in us? (v.15)
12. How does our love grow more perfect? (v.17) What does this mean?
13. What does perfect love do? (v.18)
14. Read Ephesians 1: 4-5. What did God do? How did He do it? Why?
15. Read Galatians 4:4-7. Why was Jesus born through a woman? What did that enable Him to do? How did His sacrifice position us?
16. Read John 13:34. What is the command? How are we to love others? How is that demonstrated through action?
17. Read Romans 12:14. What is the command? How does this apply to loving others as God does? What happens when we choose to curse others?
18. What happens when we withhold forgiveness to someone? Does it interfere with our ability to remain in God's love and give it out?
19. Read Galatians 2:20. How are we to live? How does this position in our heart enable us to love God and love others as He desires?
20. How can living in the love of God bring you greater freedom?

Point to ponder: God is love. He sent His love down from glory through His Son. Jesus is love's pure light. Let us give thanks this Advent season for our God who loves us beyond comprehension and for the gift of His Son, who made a way for us live in the love of God.