

Advent: Love

Day 1

Basics

How do you see an invisible God? The answer from God is incarnation, that is, making spirit flesh. God first does this in a general way in the opening chapters of Genesis, where he creates everything in the universe by his word. This creation declares the glory of God, helping us to see his power and majesty. But God is more than power and majesty, so how do you see his most important attribute, namely his love? You do it through the incarnation of Christ, God becoming flesh and dwelling among us. Read more about this here:

<https://growrag.wordpress.com/2016/12/20/gods-love-is-the-incarnation-why-Christians-celebrate-this-season/>

Verses: John 1:14, 1 Timothy 3:16, Galatians 4:1-7

Prayer Topics: Incarnation, Glory, Truth

Day 2

Love

The heart of the incarnation is love. Check out this article to learn more:

<https://stshenoudamonastery.org.au/incarnation-revealing-essence-love/>

Verses: John 6:51-58, Ephesians 1:4, John 17:26

Prayer Topics: Sacrifice, Leadership, Reverence

Day 3

Incarnational Love

God's love has been manifest in the incarnation, when Jesus was born on this earth to proclaim the kingdom of God and to die for our sins. There are many things we can learn about the love of God when we study the incarnation.

Here are a few:

<https://www.christianpost.com/voices/7-timeless-truths-about-the-incarnation-of-christ.html>

Verses: 1 Corinthians 1:21, Hebrews 1:3, 1 Peter 1:20

Prayer Topics: Purpose, Power, Fullness

Day 4

Receiving Gifts

Today is Christmas day, and for many it is the culmination of a heavy burden that will end when the day is over. We have spent many hours preparing, shopping, gift giving, as well as cooking, cleaning, and generally trying to measure up. Christmas often becomes a burden, there is the rush to get the list of tasks accomplished, there is the financial burden, and then there is the personal burden. We want to please those around us. We want to create for them a Christmas experience that is a blessing. We want our children to be overjoyed with their gifts, to have magical memories and deep happiness. We want those around us to know that we value them, and for their holiday season to be meaningful. Many people feel like they are not up to the task of accomplishing all that they are responsible for at Christmas, and the burden can dim the joy of the season. Christmas is primarily about the gift that God has given to us, not about the gifts we give each other. Christmas is a marker of the grace of God bestowed on us first and foremost, so spend some time today receiving the grace of God:

<https://newspring.cc/devotionals/what-is-god-like-a-21-day-devotional/god-is-full-of-grace>

Verses: Ephesians 1:5-8, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Romans 11:6

Prayer Topics: Acceptance, Peace, Joy

Day 5

Thanks to Sylvester Warsaw, Jr for our devotional today

The Advent Season is the time of the year people in relationship with God or not take the time to be civil to be human as they demonstrate their love to family and friends. Songs like Joy To The World and Handel's Messiah are sung and played by people trying to conjure up meaning that only God can give. The depth and gravity of this season is missed when people try to understand God's love with their own understanding of their/our fallen nature instead of looking to God for understanding. The themes of the Advent Season are hope, joy, peace and love. There's no hope, joy or peace without God's love. These themes aren't just for the Advent Season, but, as followers of Christ Jesus this must be who we are because who we represent is who He is. God's love is non-negotiable in order for peace, joy and hope to thrive. Everything depends on God's love that gives meaning and understanding to life. Every human has the opportunity to experience God's love daily (Matthew 5:43-48), however, when in relationship with Christ Jesus we have the opportunity to experience Him in His fullness, Psalm 16:11; John 15:9-10.

Everyday is Christmas, a day of celebration every time Christ is born into the life of people. God's gift of love isn't only available during Advent but daily. God is love and He extends His gift of love daily to all making His love

available for all to receive to accept. God doesn't force anyone to accept His love because when He created humanity He gave man free will, therefore, everyone has the freedom to accept His gift of love or reject His love. We who claim to be followers of Christ Jesus, daily have the opportunity to offer Him to our brothers and sisters because there's nothing more valuable than Christ Jesus. The things of this world can't address the issues of the heart because the things of this world are created in rebellion by deceit and love doesn't manipulate through deception. True love comes only from God and leads only to God in and through Christ Jesus. The mystery of God's love is understood and realized by the cross because God's love towards man has always been about redemption and redemption is only in and through Christ Jesus. Therefore, everyday is a day of thanksgiving, a day of celebration when Christ Jesus is born into the heart of a person. As followers of Christ Jesus we carry His presence for a reason so others may come to know Him in the pardon of their sins and receive the gift of salvation, 2 Peter 2:9. Share the love of God by loving your neighbor as yourself.