

Love Came Down | John 3:16 and 1 John 4:9

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[0 : 00] Welcome to Ontario Community Church, where we're dedicated to encouraging, equipping, and engaging lives for Christ. Located in Ontario, Oregon, Pastor Patrick Daley preaches insightful sermons from the Word of God, offering practical applications for modern living.

We're delighted to share this sermon with you. What a great time is it to be able to sing praises to our God, to take time to worship Him, to sing these Christmas songs, these songs that we sing, they are a reminder of the love that God has for us in sending His Son down to the earth, to Bethlehem, to be born in a manger.

The prophecies and the promises made so long ago were fulfilled because our God tells the truth. He is not a liar.

He is a promise keeper. And there were many prophecies that were fulfilled on that holy night that we celebrate together.

Love came down, and that's the title of this message tonight. And we're basing this off of mainly two passages from John 3.16 and 1 John chapter four, verse nine.

[1 : 28] You know, the love that God has for us is a love that is unlike any sort of love that is found here on the earth. It is something that is supernatural.

It is something that is beyond our human understanding. The love of God, Christ came down into our world to live and dwell among us people.

Love reached down to humble beginnings in a manger. Love came down to our level, down to us, down to our world from heavenly places.

The love that God has for us, it is active. It is sacrificing, and it is everlasting. And I want to bring up these two verses that will help us understand this kind of love.

I'd like to go to the John 3.16 passage, and it says, feel free to follow along on the screen. Some of you will know it.

[2 : 35] Maybe. It's okay, that's all right, that's all right. Oh, there we go, all right. Let's read it together. For God so loved the world that he gave his only son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

This verse speaks of how God has this love for the world. So much so that because of this love, he sent his one, his only son, Jesus the Christ, Jesus the Messiah into the world.

And the love that this verse is speaking of is agape love. It is divine love, and it is greater than earthly love.

It is something that is much more powerful. And God sent his son at the right appointed time for Christ to be born in Bethlehem in a manger.

And did you know that when John speaks of God loving the world, he's speaking of agape love, that word, the world is where we get the word cosmos.

[3 : 52] Everyone in the world in this context, but in a similar way, it could mean everyone in the universe, but we're thinking of people in this particular sense.

And I found that to be very interesting, everyone in the world, the word here in biblical times is speaking to everyone in the world.

And this takes us to our second verse, which is found in 1st John chapter four, verse nine. Let's read this together. It says, in this, the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only son into the world so that we might live through him.

And this verse is to show it's a connection with the John 3 16 passage. It helps us to understand that Christ was born.

It was a manifestation that Jesus was born among us, among everyday people. And it's just such a radical thought if you think about it.

[5 : 01] When you think of other gods, it's about what you can do for the God. But our God, the God of the Bible, sent his son to us.

And that's something that's very powerful just to think of Jesus Christ being born as a child, a young baby. That's something that is radical and that's something that's powerful of the love that God has for us.

And this is the reason why we celebrate. It's that sacrifice. It's that agape love that God has for us, that God sent his son to dwell among us.

And this love that God has for us, it is active today as it was yesterday. God's love is sacrificing and it is everlasting.

Jesus Christ coming down from heaven to be born in a manger is a wonderful type of love. It is in the stillness.

[6 : 08] It is in the quiet, the silent night, being born in a stable among animals. Now, I don't know about you.

Has anyone here been born in a stable before? If you have, then kudos to you, right? I think for majority of us, we were born in a hospital, right? Where it's clean and it's appropriate for children. But to be born in hay, right? With animals, it's not always the, you don't get the cleanest thought with that. But that is the humble beginnings of our savior, of our Messiah.

Not being born in a hotel or the Marriott or any of the fancy hotels. I don't know all the fancy hotels out there. I don't know you guys, but with that, in a humble beginning.

And Christ was not born in a palace or in a fancy hotel like I'm saying, but they're born in the manger in hay, right?

[7 : 12] How many of us have animals, right? Or you've played with hay before maybe? Have you laid in hay before? Right? It's kind of a funny imagery there, but not so much for our savior having that humble beginning.

It was there that God's love came down. And as we have read from Luke chapter two, we heard about how the angels, they proclaimed the good news with great joy about Christ, the Messiah, the son of the living God being born in the city of David.

This Christmas story is the story of how love came down in Jesus Christ. And I want you to consider for a moment the shepherds that were there.

They were watching their flocks at night and how the gospel message was proclaimed to them, the good news of great joy. And in the same way, these shepherds, they heard the good news of great joy of the arrival of Jesus being born.

There is a message of Jesus Christ providing salvation for all who believe just as we went over the first verse, that whoever, whosoever, that all who believe, it doesn't matter what ethnicity you have.

[8 : 39] It doesn't matter your socioeconomic status. It doesn't matter your education level. It doesn't matter if you're tall or short or if you're fat or skinny. All who believe shall not perish but have eternal life or everlasting life as some translations say.

That salvation is this free gift. And when we think of the manger, the nativity, we think of how God is changing the course of history, making salvation available for everyone, for all.

And maybe this is a call for you, for this Christmas to believe in the Lord. Maybe this is a call for you to get right with the Lord.

Maybe it's been a long time since you've set foot in a church. Maybe it's been a long time since you've opened a Bible. Maybe you don't even know what a Bible is. I don't know where you are at in your own spiritual walk or journey.

But I hope and I pray that all of you, your spiritual journey begins with Christ. And from that point in belief that you are on a path of growing in faith, growing in love with Christ.

[9 : 58] In John chapter eight, verse 12, it reveals to us that Christ is the light of the world. When we light these candles, I want you to think about this that Jesus Christ being the light of the world, right?

It shines in the darkness. I want to put this verse on the screen. Let's read it together. Again, Jesus spoke to them saying, I am the light of the world.

Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. And it is in believing in Christ. We exhibit that same light.

Sharing in the hope of Jesus, sharing in the good news of the gospel. There is hope in Jesus Christ. There is peace that surpasses all understanding.

There is joy that is inexpressible, that is unspeakable. And of course, there is everlasting love, the agape love that is divine, that is transcendent.

[11 : 05] This is, these are but attributes of our God. And when we think of the light of Christ, think of the darkness. If you're in a dark room and you turn on the light, you turn on a light bulb or a flashlight or a candle, you see how it illuminates the room.

And it makes me think of how when we believe in the Lord, in Matthew chapter five, I want to put that on the screen here. It's interesting that same light that comes from Christ can shine in us so that we can exhibit love to others.

Sharing in the gospel message. Let's read this Matthew passage together. This is what Christ is saying. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden, nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand and it gives light to all in the house.

In the same way, let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and give glory to your father who is in heaven.

Believe in the Lord and be saved. That is first and foremost. In this Christmas season, we recognize the sacrifice that God made for us by sending his son down to earth.

[12 : 30] We believe in the Lord and we shall be saved. And because of this saving grace, it should move us to grow in our faith and to do good in the name of the Lord.

And as we conclude our time, we're gonna sing Silent Night, but we're also going to light the candle together. I actually don't have one. Oh, I do have one.

Okay. We're gonna light this together. Do you all have a candle? Please stand. What we're gonna do, let us know if you don't have a candle, please.

If anyone doesn't have a candle, go ahead and raise your hand or let's make sure everyone has a candle. These candles represent the light of Christ in these attributes that I was talking about.

Hope of the Lord, peace that surpasses all understanding, joy unspeakable and the love. And they all point to Jesus Christ, who is the light of the world.

[13 : 34] And I wanna begin. By lighting my candle, hopefully it doesn't blow out. It's just a reminder that Jesus is the light of the world that shines in the darkness.

And that we, as believers, we grow in faith. We become the light of the world, showing Christ's likeness in all that we do.

As we hold our candles, I want us to think of the love that Christ has for us and think for a moment of how perhaps you have experienced or how you have felt or how you have seen the love of Christ in your own life.

Let us carry the light of Christ into the world, not just tonight, but in everyday living, in every action, in every word and in every deed, and with all that we are.

May we share that love of Christ with others. And may we thank the Lord for this love that he has given to us.

[14 : 52] And let's pray, Father, we thank you for sending your son who is the way, the truth, and the life.

Your son is the light of the world. And oh, do we need a light in this world. We need truth in this world.

We need a constant. And that constant is found in your son, Jesus. Be with us, Father, as we go from this place.

May we know who you are. May we grow in knowing you and go and do good in the name of Jesus Christ.

And we all say together, amen. Amen. Thank you for tuning in to the Ontario Community Church sermon podcast. For more about our church and how you can get involved or support our mission, please visit ontariocommunitychurch.org.

[15 : 57] May God's blessings be with you.

Thank you.