



## The Great Love of God

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By Rev. David Koch

### Introduction:

Heavenly Peace: A little boy and girl were singing their favorite Christmas carol in church the Sunday before Christmas. The boy concluded “Silent Night” with the words, “Sleep in heavenly beans.” “No,” his sister corrected, “not beans, peas.”

Michael P. Green, [Illustrations for Biblical Preaching](#), Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993, p. 57.

This morning I want to share with you from the text that is one of the most familiar in the Bible.

### John 3:16-17

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”

In the advent reading this morning, we heard the words of Zechariah (Luke 1:67-80). I want us to consider several things that he spoke under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the prophecy he gave. He mentioned that Jesus had come to redeem His people. He mentioned that God had raised up a horn of salvation for Israel. He mentioned that salvation and mercy were shown to us through Jesus Christ. We can boil everything down about the purpose of Christ’s coming to this – He came that we might have relationship and might experience the Love of God.

God so loved the world that He gave. There is a great deal of truth to the fact that you can give without loving, but you can’t love without giving. Let’s together explore the love of God that was demonstrated to us by Jesus coming to be near us.

#### I. The Love of God is generous.

God is extremely generous in His giving. It’s easy to give up one penny out of 100. There are still 99 left. It’s easier to relinquish something that is not an original, and there are more where that came from. There was no one else to replace Jesus. God demanded of Himself the very best, His all, His only begotten Son.

That type of generosity gets to me. We have the capacity to give to that extent and to give to that depth and with that kind of generosity but when you give

to the extent that God did, when you give your all, there is nothing left for you. God gave His all.

#### II. The Love of God is eternal.

God’s love never dies, it never ends. It lasts forever. One of the qualities that I Cor 13 mentions about love is that it is eternal. Love is not something that is here today and gone tomorrow. It is not based on how God feels this morning.....if He is in a bad or good mood. His love is so vast and wide and deep that we can never accurately measure its expanse. God’s love is eternal.

*Before God ever created us in eternity past, He knew that we would fall into sin. He devised a plan to come near us with His love.*

**Romans 5:8** – But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

The word commendeth means to stand near, to exhibit, so God stood near us and exhibited his love toward you and me. We are the object of His love. What a concept!

**Matthew 1:23** – “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, which means, “God with us.”

The disappointment and frustration that God must have experienced after Adam and Eve chose to disobey did not keep Him from coming near us. God did not stay away from us after we disobeyed, and sinned. Not at all. He came near us. He lived among us. He found the way to bridge the gap between man and Himself. He did that by limiting Himself and robbing himself in flesh.

**John 1:14** – And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Without Jesus coming near and God commending His love toward us, we never would have been able to see the glory of His love. We never would have been able to understand the grace and truth of God.

III. The Love of God is not condemning.

In our text we read that God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world. The word ‘condemn’ here means to judge, to punish, to sentence the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. The saving here is to protect, deliver.

*The law condemns us. If you tend to go faster than 55 in a 55 mile per hour speed zone, you are breaking the law. You are guilty and the law condemns you. If you are caught speeding, you get fined, and depending on if you have broken the law too many times, your license can be taken away. The law condemns you for your action.*

Jesus Christ came to show us the love of the Father. He is the light of life. We are condemned by loving darkness rather than light. The condemnation doesn’t come from the light, it comes from the decision people make to cling to darkness rather than light.

If you read further on past John 3: to verse 18-19, you see that the condemnation is that the light has come, but men loved darkness rather than light.

IV. The Love of God allows free choice to believe.

Jesus coming as a babe, as the Lamb of God, as the Savior is a fact. His coming is not what saves us. Without His coming we would not have access to God and His love and forgiveness. The purpose for His coming was *to show us the love of God*, and give us opportunity to experience God’s love personally.

God has left us with choice. His love does that. Even though when we choose to not believe, we break His heart, He still allows us the option of unbelief, thus ending our time here in spiritual darkness and separation from God and His love.

God’s love allows us to believe or not believe. His love does not demand we trust Him; His love gives us the opportunity to trust Him. The decision to believe in Him, to place our faith in His coming as our personal Savior, is what brings us eternal life.

V. The Love of God is valuable to those who receive it.

*A gift that is given is of no value to anyone if it is not received. Have you ever tried to give a gift to someone and they refused your gift? They might say, I just can’t accept your gift. Either they believe it is too valuable, or there is something that keeps them from receiving. You have purchased the gift, paid for it and taken effort to offer it to them. The gift has been given, but not received. So it is with God’s gift of Jesus. It will only benefit and be of value to those who receive the Gift. The value of God’s love is measured in the fact that we can be forgiven. We can have a relationship with God.*

*Without receiving God’s gift of love, we make the sacrifice and His gift of great cost worthless to us. I can’t think of a greater insult than for that to happen, yet there are people today who refuse to accept God’s gift of love to the.*

VI. The Love of God is established.

His love doesn't change with time. The strength of His love has not changed nor has it grown weaker. The object of His love is still our hearts and minds. It is a fact that Jesus Christ came as a baby and lived and died and rose again. The love He demonstrated is directed just as much to Saddam Hussein as it is directed toward you and me.

I don't want you to leave here today without having a clear understanding that God loves you.

### **Our Greatest Need:**

If our greatest need had been information, God would have sent us an educator;  
If our greatest need had been technology, God would have sent us a scientist;  
If our greatest need had been money, God would have sent us an economist;  
If our greatest need had been pleasure, God would have sent us an entertainer;  
But our greatest need was forgiveness, so God sent us a Savior.

God's love is eternal, non-condemning, generous, established, valuable, and allows free choice.

### **Conclusion:**

**Luke 2:7-14** – And she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger. Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

God so loved that He gave. His gift came through Mary, to us.

I want to ask you one question as I bring this message to a close this morning. How has God's love demonstrated through Jesus Christ, changed your life?