



John 3:16-17

This is probably the most well-known verse in all of Scripture. It's on bumper stickers and road signs and shirts. People know that God "so loved" the world.

This is because God Himself is Love. The Father is love, the Spirit is love, and the Son is love as a human. This is not simply love as a hard to define emotion—some feeling that you really like someone or something. No. In God, love is always known in action. Before creation, the Trinity lived for eternity in perfect love towards one another, and in creation, God made someone else to share that love with.

Throughout time, God has lived out his love towards us. On Christmas, God so loved the world, that the Son came to live with us.

Normally we interpret "giving his only Son" as "giving Jesus over to death," but it is also "giving Jesus to the world to live a life among His people." It is not only in his death that we see the love of God lived out, the life of Jesus is a gift of love too.

On Christmas, the relationship between the Father and the Son changed. Having lived together in spirit for eternity, now the Son was human. Now the Son was temporal. Now the Son was single minded. Now the Son was physical. Though the Trinity had existed together perfectly forever, the Father so loved the world that chose change so that the Son could live with us.

This love referenced in John 3:16 is not the Father's alone. The Son so loved the world that He would humble Himself to be with us. In the manger He thinks nothing is beneath Him. His life itself is a continual statement of His love for us. Who among us would choose going through puberty over living as an almighty God. For the Son so loved the world that He came to be with us and become one of us.

The Spirit too so loved the world that the Son would be sent and empowered by the Spirit. Throughout the life of Jesus on earth, the Spirit is present as a guide and go-between to live out the Spirit's love for us. The active love found in the life of Jesus is not the Father's alone, or the Son's alone, but all that God is, loving each and every one of us.

When Jesus is born, Love is born. The eternal love of God embodied as a human person. He lives a life of active care for others. He spends His time teaching and feeding and healing and casting out demons and continually making time for people. His love is in words and actions and compassion. It is lived out in everything He does that all that Jesus is loves each person He comes to meet.

On Christmas, when God sends the Son to live with us, we find the love of God in a new and unique way: that whoever believes in Him can live eternally at home with him both now and forevermore. We are at home whenever we draw close to God. Whenever the Spirit empowers us, whenever we are made more like Jesus, whenever we live out God's love to another, we are at home with God.

As you light the 4th candle, the Love candle. Remember the great love God has for you. Our perfect God loves you so much He continually chooses to be with you.

Take a moment to light the first four candles and let these flames remind you of His presence with you today.

Pray: "Lord, let me be filled with your love. Help me experience the depth of the love you have for me and let me express that towards others that they may see my good deeds and glorify you." Sit in God's presence and think back over the times that you have experienced God's love in your life.