

God With Us: The Wonders of His Love

December 11-12, 2021

Speaker: Pastor Heather Zempel **Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Series Overview:

Advent is a season of preparation. A season of anticipation! A season of Peace, Hope Love and Joy, and we need more of all four!

Series Discussion Questions:

How is God working around me in this season to show me His Peace, Hope, Love and Joy?

Message Overview:

God is love. It's who He is and it's what He does. The story of Christmas is not a saccharine-coated, sentimental folk tale. It is the story of ultimate sacrifice- a king who left his throne to be God with us. A king who would hang on a cross to be God for us. As followers of Jesus, we are called to walk the difficult way of love as outlined in 1 Corinthians 13.

Message-Specific Discussion Questions:

What does love require of us?

Allow Jesus to define the meaning of God's love

- Read John 3:16-17
- Beyond the Christmas story, the book of John expresses that love was the driving motivation for Jesus to come
- God is the definition of love, not only by who God is, but what God does.

" Show me the wonders of your great love..."

Psalm 17:7

Love is the defining trait of us, as followers of Jesus

Read John 13:34-35

- Read 1 John 4:7-12
- What does this Love look like in our daily lives?

What is love? What is it not?

- Read and reflect on 1 Corinthians 13:4-7
- Paul shares several reminders of what love is not.
- He also shares what God's love looks like
 - o Love is patient not just in circumstances, but with others
 - o Love is kind more than niceness, it is a healthy power leveraged in the hardest of situations with others
- What is a situation that you recently faced that challenged you to be patient and kind with others?

What are the standards of love?

- Read 1 Corinthians 12:31
- The better way of love is a path. It is not easy, but it is a journey that God has provided standards to guide us.
 - o Love always protects
 - o Love always trusts
 - o Love always hopes
 - b Love always perseveres
- It is impossible to love without God.
- God with us...God for us...God in us.

Prayer: Lord, help me experience and embrace the wonders of your great love. I know that this is impossible without You. Help me know what love requires of me, and accept that Your work is bigger than anything I can do alone.

Practical Application

- o Keep a daily rhythm of renewal and resilience in the middle of the hustle and bustle. Connecting with what God is doing around us, through a short daily devotional. Download the NCC app or go to ncc.re/daily.
- o Review the verses in this week's sermon discussion guide. Write down in your journal one thing that God is showing you as a way to love as God defines love, in this season of life.
- o Seek pastoral care & prayer if you are unsure of how to love in a healthy way. national.cc/care-prayer
- o Start the day with positive encouragement, in a prayerful virtual gathering by joining the <u>Upper Zoom</u> each Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at 7:14am. **Register at** <u>ncc.re/UpperZoom</u>