

## I Want Love

Lesson 04 of the series, "All I Want for Christmas"

### A. We live in a fallen world that desperately needs love.

"You should know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times. For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred. They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control. They will be cruel and hate what is good. They will betray their friends, be reckless, be puffed up with pride, and love pleasure rather than God. They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly." 2 Timothy 3:1-5 (NLT)

### B. God sent His Son into our fallen world to rescue us because He loves us.

"For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16 (NLT)

"So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, 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." Luke 2:4-7 (NIV)

"So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son." John 1:14 (NLT)

#### 1. God loves us so much.

"Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure." Ephesians 1:4-5 (NLT)

"And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully." Ephesians 3:18-19 (NLT)

*Note:* Even when life is hard we can trust that God loves us and has NOT forgotten us.

"Yet Jerusalem says, 'The LORD has deserted us; the Lord has forgotten us.' 'Never! Can a mother forget her nursing child? Can she feel no love for the child she has borne? But even if that were possible, I would not forget you! See, I have written your name on the palms of my hands. Always in my mind is a picture of Jerusalem's walls in ruins.'" Isaiah 49:14-16 (NLT)

#### 2. God willingly sacrificed His only Son to save us.

"When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners." Romans 5:6-8 (NLT)

"Then Simeon blessed them, and he said to Mary, the baby's mother, 'This child is destined to cause many in Israel to fall, but he will be a joy to many others. He has been sent as a sign from God, but many will oppose him. As a result, the deepest thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your very soul.'" Luke 2:34-35 (NLT)

### C. God wants us to respond to His love.

#### 1. God wants us to receive His gift of love.

"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." John 1:12 (NIV)

"If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. ...For 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'" Romans 10:9-13 (NLT)

2. God wants us to love Him completely.

“You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment.” Matthew 22:37-38 (NLT)

“O God, you are my God; I earnestly search for you. My soul thirsts for you; my whole body longs for you in this parched and weary land where there is no water. I have seen you in your sanctuary and gazed upon your power and glory. Your unfailing love is better than life itself; how I praise you! I will praise you as long as I live, lifting up my hands to you in prayer. You satisfy me more than the richest feast. I will praise you with songs of joy. I lie awake thinking of you, meditating on you through the night.” Psalm 63:1-6 (NLT)

3. God wants to fill us with His love.

“God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them.” 1 John 4:16 (NLT)

“For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.” Romans 5:5 (NLT)

“I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God’s love and keep you strong.” Ephesians 3:16-17 (NLT)

4. God wants us to love others just as He loved us.

“And may the Lord make your love for one another and for all people grow and overflow, just as our love for you overflows.” 1 Thessalonians 3:12 (NLT)

“For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

Galatians 5:14 (NLT)

“Don’t just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other.”

Romans 12:9-10 (NLT)

“For Christ’s love compels us....” 2 Corinthians 5:14 (NIV)

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### Scriptures to consider

“If someone says, ‘I love God,’ but hates a Christian brother or sister, that person is a liar; for if we don’t love people we can see, how can we love God, whom we cannot see?” 1 John 4:20 (NLT)

“Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.” 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (NLT)

“No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him.” 1 Corinthians 2:9 (NLT)

“This change of plans greatly upset Jonah, and he became very angry. So he complained to the LORD about it: ‘Didn’t I say before I left home that you would do this, LORD? That is why I ran away to Tarshish! I knew that you are a merciful and compassionate God, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. You are eager to turn back from destroying people. Just kill me now, LORD! I’d rather be dead than alive if what I predicted will not happen.’” Jonah 4:1-3 (NLT)

### Discussion Questions

1. When did you first fall in love? How did you feel? How did you act?
2. Read Matthew 22:37-38 and Psalm 63:1-6. What does it look like to love God completely? Would others describe you as someone madly in love with God? Why or why not?
3. Tina Turner said that love was “just a second-hand emotion.” How would you define love?
4. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. What does love look like? How does Paul describe love put into action?

5. Read Romans 5:6-8. In your opinion, why did Jesus come into our world?
6. What is the best Christmas present you received this year? Which gift did you most enjoy giving? Why?
7. In your opinion what is the true meaning of Christmas?