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Advent and God's Emotions

Well, good morning. We are going to be talking about Advent. We began a series last week and not every Sunday we are going to be talking about this but many of them we are, this one we are. And so, if you would like to follow along with the teaching notes you can find them online. We will put up a screen that shows you how to get to those and you can have access to those. We have our archives, our resources on that website page and you can find them, download them, you know, go through them, use them as a Bible study, whatever you like. We make that available to you. And so, I just wanted to highlight that.

We're gonna look at Romans chapter 5 today, primarily. So, you can turn there in your Bibles, Romans Chapter 5. You know, getting ready for the Christmas season, the Advent Season, there's many fun family traditions that we engage in. Some of the are really unique. It's one of my favorite things is to ask people, "What are your family traditions that you engage with during the holiday season?"

My parents, because of our friends, many years ago, probably 25 years ago or something, decided that we would eat Chinese food every Christmas Eve as part of our holiday tradition. So, it's really fun and many of you know that there are, just like any cuisine, you know, there are, rungs of quality that you can partake in in that specific cuisine and for whatever reason, we started at the very bottom rung many years ago, so much so, I'm not going to say where we ate or what, because I don't want to uncover anyone, but it was one of those things where you prayed to God that you would be able to open your Christmas gifts the next morning because many times as a child, not many times, but several times, I just didn't, the food didn't sit well with me. It's probably not a good idea to eat seafood from a buffet always. And so over the years we've just worked up in our rungs and, you know, holiday traditions and stuff. I was telling this story in the first service and my mom was over there going, "No! Stop stop." She didn't want me to uncover our family secrets.

But Christmas Eve will be delighting ourselves in some delicious Chinese food cuisine which is wonderful.

Okay, look at Romans chapter 5, verse 8. What we're gonna look at actually start reading in verse 6. Romans 5, verse 6 Paul says, "For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us," now that's the key phrase that we're gonna lock into this morning. "God demonstrates His love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." I mean just a remarkable statement from Paul. "Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him." Join me in prayer.

Father we thank You for Your Word. We ask You for that Spirit of wisdom and revelation that You walk about. We ask You Lord that You would enlighten our eyes and our understanding to the person of Christ and to the work of the incarnation, God becoming a man. We ask You that You would draw us ever near to You in this time. Lord that this would be a season as You remind us of how you approached us. You have approached us that we would be encouraged and stirred to approach You and draw near to You. We thank You for Your generosity toward us and the gift of Your Son and we celebrate You Lord. In Your name we pray. Amen.

Well, many of you know that this is the season that is traditionally called Advent. And it's the Sundays that are leading up to the Sunday before Christmas and the Advent means the coming or the appearing, the coming or the appearing. And so, we know that in history, at the birth of Christ there was the coming of the Lord but the tradition doesn't only celebrate the first coming of the Lord, but it celebrates both comings. Both the first coming, that is historical, obviously that has passed, and the second coming of Christ that is yet future to us. So, we live in this time that's referred to as the Intra Advent Period. That's just the fancy term for between the coming. It's important that we know that, though, because we are to engage as believers. We are to engage with the benefits and the riches that we received from His first coming and that we also look forward to with great hope and joy within our hearts, we look forward to that day where He will come again physically, bodily, just like He came the first time.

So, the word Advent comes from this Latin word that mean to arrive or come to. And as I was studying this, it's also connected to this verb form which I found interesting of this Latin word for advent which is defined, not only as to arrive or to come to, as we picture in the first coming, but also to develop something. That key word develop, to set into place, to set in. And then also to arise, to arise. And what that indicates to us is that the coming of the Lord, the first Advent, the second Advent, really is meant to be the catalyst for our lives. That the, as we celebrate the story of Jesus, it's not just sentimental or nostalgic as we look back and "Oh sweet baby Jesus. Isn't He so cute, you know, laying in a manger." But it's meant to develop something, it's meant to illicit a response from our hearts.

I mentioned that it's to be a catalyst in our lives. A catalyst is this, is a substance, or a property that when it comes in contact with another substance or property, there's some, there's an explosion, there's a reaction that happens. And that is meant to be an occurrence in us as we experience Advent. The first Advent of Christ is meant to develop, to cause this catalytic response within our hearts, within our lives. It's meant to set in Christ in a way into our minds. He's meant to be set in as premier as preeminent, as the center of everything that we are.

And then thirdly, He's meant to arise. You know the kingdom of heaven, this scripture that describes it as this leavened bread that is growing and growing and growing and we know from the scripture that ultimately the knowledge of the glory of God will cover the whole earth as the waters cover the sea, that part of the appearing of Christ in the Second Advent leads to the arising of name and the fame and the glory of God to where the whole earth is going to be under the presence and the manifest glory of the very Son of God, this Man that we observe and worship even during this holiday season.

Well, we're looking at Romans chapter 5 and we're gonna focus in on verse 8. Now this verse doesn't tell us the details of the first Advent. There is no mention of Mary and Joseph and, you know, shepherds or wise men or anything like that from the traditional story. But what it does is it gives us a glimpse into the why. Why did He come? Why did God choose to manifest His Son, to show forth His Son, to take up the yoke of human experience, to become flesh and bones, to be subject to the experiences that we all do? I mean, He was the Lord of glory and yet He became subject to heat and cold and sickness and, you know, temptation and the feelings of hunger and the feelings of longing and the feelings of rejection. He became subject to all those. He allowed Himself to feel them. And it's just a very powerful and notable thing. And so, what Paul is highlighting here in Romans 5, verse 8, gives us insight into why He came and that is to demonstration of His love for us. God choose to demonstrate His love towards us, to show forth His love.

The things that were in His heart, He was able to manifest those things toward us. Imagine if you could take your strongest feelings, you know the imprint of who you are and what you feel and what you desire and you were able to manifest that in an individual, you know. We call that our children. When we look at our kids, they are often the imprint, or the manifestation for good and for bad, often of who we are. You know, they are little mirrors. Our kids, they tell me exactly who I am all the time. And sometimes that's glorious and sometimes, not so much. But Christ is the manifestation of God. He's the one that fully is able to display and manifest and tell the story of who the Father is in His brilliance and beautiful.

Well, let's look at some of these other verses. If you are following along on the handout, John chapter 1, verse 14. Now, John chapter 1, if you are unfamiliar with that passage, it is one of the premier chapters in the Bible that speak of this reality of God becoming a man and just the uniqueness of that. Now, we hear that many many times during our walk with the Lord or maybe at church and things like that, we hear that. But this mystery is meant to invoke worship and awe forever and ever and ever. It's never something that we graduate from. We are never supposed to trivialize it or take it for granted, the fact that God became a man. And we will look at that more in just a moment.

But John Chapter 1, if you don't know, is one of the premier chapters in the Bible that describes that taking place. In John 1:14, it says that the Word became flesh. Now, who's the Word? The word is Jesus. He's the second person of the trinity before He enters into Mary's womb. And just, I mean, just that idea that God, in His fullness, in His divinity, entered into the human womb. I mean, is there not a more vulnerable place to be than inside of a young Jewish girl, unmarried womb? That is a very vulnerable place to be, especially in that day and time. And the Word becomes flesh. He takes on flesh and human form availing His glory. It says that He dwelt among us, that He dwelt among us. He didn't choose to remain in His heavenly temple, in the power and the presence of His Father. He set that aside and He came and He experienced all of the things that we experience on a day to day basis. He is a remarkable God. What kind of God wants to take on the experiences, the tribulations, the sorrow, the pain of the very thing that they created? There is no other God like that. It is so, it just stands out to me.

And so, He comes and He dwells among us. And then John tells us that we beheld His glory. We saw His glory and the glory that He had was the glory that was begotten of the Father. In

other words, what the Father wanted to demonstrate about who He was, He shows us in the Son. And this is very important because many have an idea about the Father that is very different than the idea of Jesus in terms of their demeanor. In terms of their character, the personality, a lot of people imagine God in the way that the Pagans do. He's angry, and has lightning bolts, and is ready to strike us. And the Father says, "I don't want humanity to know Me in that way because that is not true of Me." The Father determined, He goes, "I want them to know Me as I am. So how I am going to do that is I am going to wrap My beloved Son in human flesh and I am going to allow Him to come and be among the very people that I have created." And He is subject to all their criticism and disdain and rejection and we see that in the life of Christ and He says, "And when they see My Son, when they encounter Him, when they hear the effortless authoritative words with which He speaks of Me, when they see His power to heal the sick, when they see His ability to lift the lowly and the rejected from the ashes, His heart for the poor, His heart for the leper, His heart for the outcast, they will see Me." And that is the great glory of the incarnation is that when we see Christ and we see His works in the Scripture and by the Spirit on the inside of us, we see the Father and what He is truly like. It is remarkable.

The incarnation, paragraph A, the incarnation with the Holy Son, He comes, and He reveals the nature of the Father. In other words, He comes down, God comes down to us in a manner that we can understand and relate to and He speaks to us, just think about this, He speaks to us in a way that we can understand and relate to, He speaks our language. It is remarkable. You know if you think of some of the most brilliant minds or theologians or philosophers throughout all of human history, if you took just the average dork, like me, and you sat them in a room with that individual and we're trying to talk, I mean the things that they would talk about and expound upon, you know and some crazy, you know, they're PHD's in quantum physics and they're trying to explain to me quantum physics and you know my weak brain is having such a hard time getting my mind around what they're talking about because they are experts in their field. You know, maybe they've devoted their whole life to these ideas in quantum physics and he's speaking to me and I'm like a kindergartner, and he's telling me about the power and the glory of quantum physics. Most people in that position don't boil it down to the most simple parables. And Jesus, when He comes to humanity, when the word becomes flesh, He takes the most advanced revelation that exists, He's the most brilliant Man that's ever lived, Christ, He's fully God and fully man. And He conveys the truths of who God is. I mean God is quantum physics times a billion. I mean He is quantum physics. It's all in Him. And Jesus comes and in His humility, He comes down and He speaks to us in parables of farming. He speaks to us in parables of soil. He speaks to us in this, in these relatable terms of a Father who wants a family and there is this Son who is a prodigal and he's run away from the father and He wants to demonstrate the mysteries and the multifaceted glory of God and He just speaks to us with such humility and kindness. You know, He could have come down and just fried our circuits just with His intellect alone, just with what He knows.

Think about what God knows. This is about what Christ knew. He's the Word. He was there in the beginning and beyond the beginning, eternity past before there was life, before there were stars and animals and the sea and the mountains, God was there. And to speak to Christ, to hear from Him was not just to talk to a man and a teacher and a prophet but it's actually to interact with an eternal being. And when you consider Christ, or when you behold His works, or when you become the recipient of the works of God when He touches Your life, you're interacting with

an eternal being. Don't you want to know, or even have a conversation with a person that's eternal? How much would they know?

You know I like to talk with folks that are older than I am because they have so much wisdom, they have so much experience just walking through life. You walk up to somebody that's 20, 30, 40, 50 years older than you and the things that they say and their perspective on things is so different than often our experiences. And here's Jesus, the eternal word, and He's relating to us in such humility and tenderness and He's not frying our circuits with His intellect, He's not frying our circuits with His power. We're not blowing up because of the, you know, the fettered glory of God that resides within Him. He could just pull back the veil and just nuke everybody, cause us to melt down. I mean He comes and He's speaking to us out of His wisdom and His power but He's telling us about His Father. He's telling us about the kingdom of heaven. He's telling us about the narrow way. He's telling us that He is the way, that He is eternal life and He wants us to share in that fellowship with Him, the transcendent eternal God and He clothes Himself in flesh and He comes and meets with us and He speaks with us. It is glorious.

So, Paul says in 2nd Corinthians 4, verse 6, it's one of my favorite verses, I love this verse, but I can never like get my mind around it. It's like one of those verse you just come back to again and again and again and it's mysterious and powerful and like what does this mean and every time I feel like I got it, it like, slips out of my hands and Paul says this, "It is the God who commanded light to shine out of the darkness." He's not just speaking of actual light, though He is the God that calls forth light out of the darkness, but he's speaking about revelation. He begins to go on, he says, "He has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ." So, this is what I do, I take this verse before the Lord. I have used this as my meditation before Him. I picture Christ and I picture looking into His face and sometimes I'm picturing Him in His human nature, His human form. You know, He's a Jewish man with dark hair and dark eyes, likely, I don't know that for sure, but that was probably what He looked like in his natural form. And I am picturing Him and I'm imagining when I look into Him, when I see His character and I hear His words and I experience what He is like just being around Him, I'm experiencing the Father. I am experiencing the knowledge of the glory of God and that is what I want and that's what every Christian is endeavoring to want. We want Him. Our aim is Him. He is our joy and our treasure and our reward.

You know, He says that Abraham in Genesis chapter 15, He said, "I am you exceedingly great reward." It's all about you get Him, if you experience Him and you see the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, you see the Father through the Son, that, in that experience, in that exchange you have all that you need. And I know that is a huge statement. It's a huge statement cause we go, "Well don't we need other things? Don't we need relationships and food and clothing?" And Jesus say this staggering thing when He has been tempted by Satan, He says, "Man does not live by bread alone, but by the very words that come from the mouth of God." You see God in His beauty and His glory, when we experience it, when we hear it, it has power and life giving power that touches our hearts to sustain us and refresh us, but not just to sustain us, but to actually to delight our souls in who He is, in the fullness of who He is.

Well, Advent, this whole season, it tests our hearts. The appearing of Christ, we know, tests the hearts of those that hear it. In the first century when Jesus was born and came, you know, and

He's laid in the manger, it's testing the hearts of everybody in Israel and most people are either ignorant of it, or unaware of it. But the wise, they understood. The wise, they came. The humble, the shepherds in the field, they came. Mary and Joseph, they know who this Son was. Hared, I think he even knew because he is threatened and he begins to wipe out the children in Bethlehem because he is threatened by this idea of this King, the Messiah running and taking Herod's power away from him.

And so, Advent tests the heart. We know looking forward through the scriptures that the day of the Lord, His second coming, that second Advent, Joel describes it as the valley of decision. It's the day of testing. It's the 'how you will receive Him'. Will you receive who He is or will you reject Him when you can actually see Him, put your hands around Him, when you can touch Him and He comes in flesh and bones and glory and the power of His Father? You know, it's this time of testing. Do we receive the Christ? That's the big question we talked about that last week but Advent tests our heart in this, it is enough that we would come before God made flesh and worship Him or do we need something else in addition to that? Are we just there to get a share of the gold and the frankincense and the myrrh or could we come before the Lord because of who He is, because just of the greatness of His person and worship Him and devote our lives fully to Him to see Him as precious, to see Him as valuable in this way?

Well, there's some distinctives to Christianity. And I have mentioned them a little bit earlier, but I want to talk more about that. Look at page two in the handout if you are following along. There is a distinctive in Christianity, it's this, this is how I would describe it. You know, other religions, other ways of truth or enlightenment, put us at the bottom of the proverbial mountain. It puts the deity and eternal life or whatever that state is after death, that is supposed to be the good one that people want, it puts that up on the mountain and it puts us at the foot of the mountain because we're new, we're to be enlightened, we're to learn something, we're to be moral or ethical or whatever it is, and in that journey we're meant to, through the teaching, though the religious teaching, we're meant to ascent up that mountain to that temple to where ever or whoever or how many deities there are, to be accepted by those deities to be blessed by them.

Christianity is distinct in this, because God is on a holy mountain in a holy temple and He is in heaven. And the difference between Christianity and these other teachings is that God knew that man could never get up there, that man could never cross the divide of the transcendent. He could never cross that divide between that which is uncreated, where God is, and that which is created where we were. And what Advent shows us is that God, the distinctive in Christianity is that God leaves His temple and His habitation and comes down the mountain to experience all of the things that we experience.

I mean there is no other God that does that. There's no other God that wants to do that. We don't even want to do that. Even the most noble, humble person, there is no way that they want to transcend their very being and identify with, you know, insects. Like, no one would want to do that. And yet, here is the God of glory, the eternal God, the Ancient of Days, and rather than calling us up the mountain, which He knew no one could ascend, no one is holy enough. No one is good enough. No one is righteous enough even to stand in His presence. He goes, "I've got an idea. I'll hide myself in human skin. I'll veil myself. I'll put a veil over myself."

You know when Moses comes off the mountain after he encounters the Lord. He has to wear a veil, why? Because all the glory that's coming off of Moses. And the Lord goes, "I'm gonna veil myself. I'm gonna come down to proverbial mountain. I'm gonna be born as this poor baby in Bethlehem, this little city, just this obscure shepherd farming town in Israel, I'm gonna veil myself, I'm gonna come down and I'm going to manifest the Father. I'm gonna show the earth what God is truly like. And I'm not just going to show them or tell them, I'm gonna demonstrate it and then further I'm going to make Myself susceptible to all the things that they may do. They may malign Me. They may reject Me. They may treat Me as a criminal." And they did and humanity actually did, and God was willing. He even knew that would happen. He goes, "I know that's gonna happen, but I want to." Go back to the original verse we looked at Romans 5:8, He goes, "I want to demonstrate and show them something that they cannot know unless I demonstrate it to them. Unless they see my Son, unless they are able to handle Him, to touch Him, to either kiss Him or betray Him or betray Him with a kiss, unless they are able to put their hands on Me, they cannot know Me and experience Me in the way that I want them to and I am committed to do this." This is incredible.

The Word became flesh and Christ walks out a story that no man could invent. You go through all the false religions, you know, what I consider false religion and you look at their beliefs and their stories and their struggles and you got all these deities and gods and some of them at war with each other and their having kids with one another, you just see human experience rehashed. But you take human experience and you project it up into the heavens and you have this god is mad at this god and he steals her sister and they have a baby and now this other baby is going to take over the dut dut du du du. And you just see this rehashing of human experience.

Well, what's so unique about Christianity is that God tells a story. And not just tells it but He comes and demonstrates it with power, with undeniable signs and wonders and a resurrection and ascension at the end that no human being would come up with. What person would image the hero, their purpose was to come and die? No one in their stories and endeavors of heroism put the character as dying as the greatest point in their life. Why, because death was the greatest enemy, in the ancient worlds especially. Beyond, there is nothing beyond death. Once you die, you're dead forever. And so, God crafts this story. He writes it. He lives it out. It's not just a story. It's history. He lives it out in such a way that is so confounding to human conventional wisdom. It is not just a struggle of good and evil. And we're going to look at some of these.

Number one, firstly, He comes to die. Now what other God comes and suffers as they themselves are innocent like Christ is, they come and suffer at the hands of murderous evil men and assume the guilt of all the sin of humanity, assume that guilt upon himself. I tell you, only Christ is the one to do that.

Number two, is that He intentionally veils His glory. I don't know the last time you were around kings or emperors or whatever but there are so few people of power and fame and notoriety, just even in our own human experience, that are intentionally trying to veil how awesome they are. It's the exact opposite. Find me the person that is influential and powerful and commands armies and they are seeking to intentionally veil their power, veil their prestige, veil their honor and associate with the very lowest people on the social total totem pole, so to speak. Like that person doesn't exist.

And God goes, "I don't want to just reveal My glory." He goes, "I actually want to intentionally veil My glory." Look at some of these verses.

Philippians 2, verses 6 to 8, it says that Christ made Himself of no reputation. He made Himself, on purpose, of no reputation. He took His whole reputation. I mean, He is God, in the flesh, He is fully God and He says, I am going to shelve that. I'm gonna shelve the reputation and the glory of My splendor, I'm gonna veil it, I'm gonna hide it on purpose so that people, normal people, you know, illiterate people, the poor of the earth, they can relate to Me and talk to Me face to face. It says that Christ takes in the form of a bond servant and in the ancient world the bond servant was the servant that had completed their time and they were released. They were free to go. They were a debt slave or maybe they were just purchased, you know, whatever. But they were released and able to go and one of the highest forms of love in that day was the servant who had the freedom to leave but they returned and they said, "You know what? I actually want to voluntarily stay here because I love you. I love you and I want to serve and I want to give my whole life. I want to give the rest of my life. I want to be a bond servant to you."

And we think of bond servants, you know, the way that Paul described himself, "I'm a bond servant of the gospel." And the way that we serve God, "I love you. I could go somewhere else. I could worship another God. I could live more for myself, but I am going to voluntarily and freely love you." But in this passage Paul is highlighting Philippians 2 that Christ was a bond servant to us. That even though He was never indebted to us, He comes to us, He relates to us like a bond servant would relate to their master. He comes so low. He goes, "I want you to know I'm voluntarily here. And I love you. And I am devoted to you and I am demonstrating my love for you. I've yoked myself to you and your fate. I've wrapped Myself around it. I'll pay your sins. I'll pay your debts. I'll fight for you. I'll serve you. I'll love you."

We see Jesus in the upper room before His crucifixion, when they're sharing the last supper with His disciples. What's He doing? He's like a bond servant, He's washing the feet of the disciples. The greater is serving the lesser. And this is what Advent shows us is that the greater comes and He comes down into the muck and the mire of our lives and He serves us. He's the greater, we are the lesser, and He comes even lower than that. Whoever it is throughout human history that is the very lowest, maybe they are the most reviled, maybe the most hated or the most despised, whoever that person is, I don't know who they are, but throughout history, you can be sure Christ came even lower to them. He washed their feet. He paid their sins. He was willing to assume their guilt upon Himself and bare it under the wrath of God and for them He is the bond servant and the servant of all that came in the likeness of men.

Verse 8, again reiterating, He humbles Himself. He humbles Himself on purposes. No one is asking Him to do it. He doesn't have to do it. But He chooses to humble Himself because He wants every individual to be able to fully and freely relate to Him and receive the gift of God of salvation and eternal life.

Thirdly, Christ is not simply a guide to eternal life, but rather, He declares that He is eternal life. He is. It's a distinctive of Christianity because many other belief systems, they teach you that so and so was the messenger of such and such God and if you do the things this messenger way,

then you will be received and approved. And so, your way to eternal life, or paradise or whatever you want to call it, your way to a glorious afterlife is through observing the teachings of this messenger. But when Jesus comes, He goes, "I'm not just the messenger. And I'm not just a prophet. And I'm not just the way to eternal life." He goes, "I am eternal life. Eternal life is found in Me. I am the God that formed you in your mother's womb. I'm the God that knit you together. I'm the God of power and light. I'm the God that called forth light out of darkness and stretched forth the heavens like the span of My hand. I am that God and eternal life is not just found though listening to My teachings, but in My very person. Will you receive Me?"

And Christianity is about relationship and a connection and an experience with a person not just an adherence to a teaching. Maybe people go through their lives and they go through their Christian experience, they go to church, they read the Bible, you know. Martin Luther is says he's teaching, he's a monk already before he actually knows Christ. He's a monk. He's praying and fasting and living this simple lifestyle. He's teaching the book of Romans. I mean he's a Bible teacher and he has devoted his whole life to the Lord but he still doesn't know the Lord that became flesh and he has this great moment, you know, an experience where he encounters the Lord through the word of God. And beloved we need that. The Advent of Christ forces the conversation. Do we know Him? Do we have eternal life in Him and through Him? Is He your exceedingly great reward? Is it all about do you long for Christ? Do you close your eyes and want Him and long for Him just like, you know, you fall in love and you're separated from that person, maybe it's long distance or whatever and your heart longs to be with that person. Do we have that same longing for Him? Do we want Him? Do we know Him in that way, because He is God in the flesh? He is still in the flesh. He is still the resurrected man.

Paragraph three, the Advent shows us that God has demonstrated His love toward us. The Father is so committed to display what He feels and what He says that He sends us the beloved Son. He is so committed to it. When I think of love, you know, when I think of how we express love and how we've experienced love. Sometimes I imagine it as this cord of three strands. Strand number one, there are emotions of the heart. Strand number two, there are the words that flow from those emotions. And then strand number three, there's the sacrificial action that I take or an individual takes to express those feelings and those words to put them into action. And you can think of the manifestation of the son, the coming of the Lord, as God saying I don't just feel love for humanity. I don't just wish that they would know me. I don't just burn with love and affection for them but I'm standing across the great divide and they don't even know I'm watching them. I'm just looking at them across the room but they don't even know. He says, "I don't just feel deep affection for those made in my image." He goes, "I don't just say it." Because He sent us prophets, sent us scribes, we have the word of God. He goes, "It's not just enough that I feel it that I say it." He goes, "I want to show it. I want to manifest it. I want to bring forth, I want to." That's why He's called the begotten Son because in the heart of the Father there is this begetting, there is this bringing forth this manifestation of what is there inside the heart of God. this love this passion, this longing inside of Him. He goes, "I manifest that longing, what do you get? You get the Christ. You get the Son of God. You get this man born of a virgin two thousand years ago with flesh and bones and personality and a job and brothers and siblings and He is God." And He goes, "I brought forth from inside of Me the very deepest longing and manifestation of My love because I want My people to know that I'll back it up. I'll show it to you. I'll manifest it to you."

You know, as a parent and as a father it's not just enough that I have nice feelings for my children. They may never know the nice feelings that I have toward them if I don't tell them and they didn't ever believe what I tell them unless I show it. See, so it's feelings, and words and action and they come together and it's the manifestation of love and it's powerful and it will change you. And that's one of the glories that we have is that that same thing that God did to us through His Son, we can do that same thing to one another. We can manifest love toward one another. We can manifest love in our marriages. We can manifest love towards our children. We can manifest love toward the broken and toward our neighbor and our co-worker. It's not just feelings and words but it is sacrificial action we demonstrate the love of God.

And what God has done is He has removed every excuse and every doubt and ever accusation against Him that He doesn't love us, that He doesn't care about us. Even in our own hearts we struggle with those feelings. Do You see me Lord? Do You love me? And He says, "I want to assure you that I do. Look at the Advent, here is the demonstration of My love. I sent My Son. I manifested that which was within Me in a way that you could relate to. You could see. You could touch. You could handle. And I have showed you and demonstrated that love to you." And He will forever more. Amen.

Well, we just have a few more moments. I want to invite out the worship team.

The Advent reveals the character and the emotions of the Father. We know that the Son is the manifestation of the Father. Everything that the Father wanted you to know about Him, He showed it in the very Son. Look at John 17, verse 22, Jesus is praying in the garden before the cross and He says, "That the glory that You gave to Me I have given to them that they would be one just as we are one." And when the Father bestows glory upon an individual, the Son or you and I, it means that He bestows value. It means that we are worth something. It means that God says, "I don't want you to just go off and you're not cast aside. You're not just here on the earth in your experience just trying to figure it out on your own." He says, "But the very glory that I've given to my Son, My value, He's precious to Me. He's my beloved Son." Jesus says, "That same value, that same glory that the Father has given to Me, I have given it to you." And we are co heirs in that glory, in that value. The Father values you. He loves you. He wants you. When that baby is born in the manger, I mean, think of the moment where the word, the eternal word that's in heaven, there is a moment of time where He entered into the womb of Mary. Think about that. There was an exchange, one moment He is with the Father and the next moment He is in the womb, hidden, vulnerable, He's flesh, inside of Mary's womb. And the Father says, "I love and I bestow glory upon that Son." He goes, "My Son, His activity, His demonstration, His manifestation towards you bestows that same glory upon you." The Father says, "I want you. I am after you." And so, in this Advent season we see and celebrate that God has drawn near to us.

And I think that the invitation for us is, will we draw near to Him in that same way.

Let's stand.