

The Advent of Love: What is Love?

Romans 5:6-11 (CEV)

What is Love?

Friendship, Romance, God

A Feeling

Friendship: I like sharing common interests, activities or values with you.

Romance: It feels good, exciting, intriguing to be with you!

God: I feel safe, cared for, accepted, loved by you.

A Decision

Friendship: I will spend time with you.

Romance: I choose you.

God: I trust you.

A Sacrifice

Friendship: I will tell you the truth about me and speak truth to you.

Romance: Your well-being is more important to me than my own.

God: I give you everything.

A Way of Living

So this makes sense on one front.

But if I read the Bible, if we really talk about love beyond the practical,

Love sounds like this from the mouth of Jesus:

You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven.

He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

(NIV)

Therefore, just as your heavenly Father is complete in showing love to everyone, so also you must be complete. (Common English Bible)

But you must always act like your Father in heaven. (CEV)

To see every person as beloved, as a child, as a friend is the norm.

To love your enemy is not.

There is no other way to say it:

The advent of love is not so we can love those we like even more.

The Advent of love is the coming of a kind of love

in which God forgives his enemies.

"Father, forgive them for they know not what they are doing.

And just when I think it is impossible:

A Victim Treats His Mugger Right

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Produced for Morning Edition by Michael Garofalo.

[\[http://www.npr.org/2008/03/28/89164759/a-victim-treats-his-mugger-right\]](http://www.npr.org/2008/03/28/89164759/a-victim-treats-his-mugger-right)

Advent is not just about what we can do.

Faith in God is not about nice religious ceremony to feel good about.

To truly believe is to say that God is changing us into what we are not.

into what we cannot make ourselves into.

That divine love, love that forgives, love that hopes, love that waits,
has come to us.

How?

Jesus tells a parable about two men who are forgiven debts.

\$800,000 and \$1000.

Who loves more?

The one who is forgiven much, loves much.

The one who is forgiven little, loves little.

Only a person who is loved can love others.

The more loved you realize you are, the more you can love.

Think upon it.