

**Preaching Christ....
...by the power of the Holy Spirit
...and the authority of the Word of God**

Date: 23 December 2012

Services: 730 and 930

Series: Advent 2012 – Christmas Gifts

Passage: John 3:16

Title: Love

- Chapel – 4th year. After the first ten minutes...
- I hope to pull off that same shocking mistake this morning.
- Creation
- Flood
- Abraham
- Moses
- Joshua
- David
- Solomon
- Exile
- Jesus
- Revelation
- Healing
- Glimpse of the future kingdom – healing and justice
- Death
- Resurrection
- Ascension
- Holy Spirit
- Return - he will come back... and take you to be with him and set you in eternity and give you a marvellous new body.... all because he loves you

- he didn't do this because you were loveable
- he didn't choose Israel because they were the best or more numerous.
- He simply set his heart to love
- God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners Christ died for us... Romans 5:8
- Ever come across someone you really didn't like? How easy is it to do something loving for them?
- Ever come across someone who has hurt you, turned their back on you, refused your love... how hard is it to love *them*?
- This is God's love for us... for you... for the world...

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- What did we read? *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life*
- SO God loved.... to such an amazing extent...
- GAVE – action... didn't just feel sad or sorry or heartbroken...
- Gave his Son... one and only – most precious...
- The sacrifice he first called on Abraham to make – he makes himself...
- Gave of himself...
- That whoever believes in him shall not perish...
- A person was pulled over by the police in the states last week...
- *A Texas motorist got the shock of his life when a policeman slipped him a \$100 note after fining him for driving an unregistered car.*
- *The driver, Hayden Carlo, told the policeman he had an outdated registration label because he simply didn't have the money to pay the registration*
- *"I said it was either feed my kids, or get this registration done," Carlo told CBS affiliate, KHOU.*
- *The excuse wasn't enough for the policeman to let him off, but he did slip a \$100 note in the folded ticket.*
- *"I opened it up and there's a 100 dollar bill. I broke down in my car," Mr Carlo told the station.*
- *The money was enough for Mr Carlo to pay the fine and update the registration of both his and his wife's car.*
- There's what God did for you... on a much bigger scale...
- You owed a debt to God you couldn't pay
- ...for your rebellion against God – going your own way
- In love – God sent Jesus to pay the fine...
- To give his life
- Lay it down
- Because the Good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep
- Because greater love has no than this – than he lay down his life for his friends... (John 15)
- This is love, not that we first loved God but that he loved us and gave his son as an atoning sacrifice for sin... (1 John 4)
- See what love the Father lavishes on us, that we should be called children of God – and that is what we are... (1 John 3)

- Advent – is a time to remember God's love – and set our hearts on it.
- Because in love – Jesus is coming back to wind up this place – to rid the universe of evil once and for all and to dwell with us in a new heavens and new earth where we will live with him in perfection for all eternity.
- And his *first* coming among us – which we remember in the next two days.. is the guarantee

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of all the love that is yet to come...

- So friends – receive and revel in his love for you...
- Draw close to him
- See the big picture of advent and Christmas and don't settle for the soppy sentimentalism the world will settle for over the coming days....
- I want to close by sharing this video with you... which I won't have time to share in the Christmas services this year... but thought *you* would enjoy... because it captures something of the love God has for us...

Here is a link to the video: <http://alturl.com/8a3ai>

(Please note that no discussion questions have been prepared for this sermon.)