

## Advent 2 2020 Love Candle

***<sup>16</sup> 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. John 3:16,17***

**This is God's love language – what is Love language?**

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1. Ich Lieber Dich meine liebste
2. I love my Harley
3. I love my cow
4. I love the outback
5. I love my kids

You hear one word, “love”.

If we were Greeks you would have heard 5 different words for love.

And wouldn't that be great – because you don't have the same love for your Harley or your cow as you do for your wife - do you?

In English we're stuck with one word for love – “love”.

The Greek word for “love” in John 3:16 is Agape.

Agape is a sacrificial love – given by God – wanting nothing in return.

God “so loved” the world that he gave his only Son.

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Not everybody knows about God's love.

It might help if we had more words for love.

In Gary Chapman's book “the 5 love languages” he explains that we all love differently – especially men and women.

Men and women are poles apart when it comes to love.

You should look at the book and discover your love language.

Is it Physical love, verbal love, acts of service, providing, giving gifts, spending time.

What is your love language?

What is the way you feel loved?

Do you even know?

One man love language is “providing” - He loves to provide – he loves it when she provides a meal – prepares a house.

Her love language is words (many women love words)

So he's working 24/7 providing and she's wanting to sit and talk – or be listened to.

Both love each other dearly but neither feels loved – because they don't recognise each other's love language.

You cannot love – unless you know your love language.

They say a man falls in love through his eyes, a woman through her ears.

(Once I fell in love with a psychic girl but she broke it off before we even met. )

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Do we know God's love language?

I don't think we do in English.

**You don't really know that God loves you until you know his love language - how he loves you.**

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John 3:16 tells us that God is a lover – he loves you.

Remember:

- Many people think God is so angry our sin that he has to sacrifice his son instead of us???
- Other people think God has no love – people are starving – fires, floods, earthquakes, volcanos – he could stop it in a flash– but he doesn't.

John simply says "God is Love" 4:8.

He lists, mercy, grace, and peace as God's love language.

God is a doer – He's not a great talker.

Mercy and grace and peace are actions – attitudes.

John says the proof of God's love for us – his mercy, grace, and peace, is allowing the death of Jesus.

God's Agape love is self-giving – wanting nothing in return - something we don't know about.

Our love runs out very quick if there is nothing in return.

God's love is an action of grace and mercy:

*Romans 5:7-8 says: "For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*

God loves through action – the death of his son.

John says that while we were still sinners God loved us – as sinners he knows all the dirt – and yet he allowed his son to die for us – that is his love – That is Agape love.

God "so" loved the world that he gave his one and only SON...

Giving his Son is God's love language.

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It's that present buying time of the year.

It's terrible – you have to get a present that represents the love you have for a person.

You walk up and down the aisles - What do you get?

Once I asked Ilona what she would like for Christmas. She said: *“Nothing would make me happier than a diamond ring”*, so I got her nothing.

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They say it's the thought that counts – not in my house.

Thoughts must be backed by actions.

We usually try and hide the value of presents don't we – we remove the stubborn price sticker.

God seems to be the opposite – he wants us to know how much it cost him. He says his gift to the world is his “only begotten Son”.

He wants us to know how much he loves us.

Do you want your partner/child/ mate to know much you love them?

The fullness of God is in Jesus – John says if you know Jesus you know the Father.

God gives of himself in love.

God gives what no one else can give.

There is nobody like Jesus.

Nobody was born like him.

Nobody lived like him.

Nobody died like him.

And nobody rose from death like him.

God so loves the world that he gave his one and only Son.

- He who was before the world began
- An uncreated, divine Person,
- He who created the angels was made a little lower than the angels.
- He who said, “Before Abraham was, I am,”

This is the son God gave in love.

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The setting for John 3:16 was a discussion in the middle of the night between Nicodemus and Jesus.

Nicodemus wants to know about the kingdom – what does he have to do;

Jesus says: “You must be born again?”

Nicodemus chokes - how can I be born again – impossible.

In believing we listen to God.

In listening to God we are baptised

In baptism we place our sin at the foot of the cross – Jesus dies the death our sin deserves.

In baptism our sin is taken away – the sentence of death is taken away - a new person is born – we are born again – without sin.

Hamish will have all his sins taken by Jesus to the cross – he will be a new boy – born again – that is love.

God has a mission – to save all people through Jesus.

He has discovered a love language that speaks to all people.

It's Agape love – love that expects nothing in return.

While I am a sinner he died for me – that does something to me.

What about you?

We play God at Christmas.

We give our naughtiest, obnoxious little kid a present for Christmas – we expect nothing in return because we love them or want to love them.

We are in the business of mission – try God's love language – love – give, serve, and expect nothing in return.

If your enemy is hungry, give them food to eat; if he is thirsty, give him water to drink.

Paul says in doing this you will “heap burning coals” on their head, and the Lord will reward you.

Burning coals is the burning power of the Holy Spirit bring that person to stop and wonder about Jesus – or more so - you being Jesus to them.

Anybody can return evil for evil – and this is what the world expects.

But not everybody can return good for evil – this makes people sit up and think.

The writer of proverbs 15 says nothing pricks the heart more than a soft, forgiving spirit given in love.

“I love you” – you will never quite know what I mean in English.

In Greek, “I Agape you” – I love, and serve, and need nothing in reply – you know what that means.

But we are not Greeks – if we want our love to be understood we need selfless, serving, giving actions to go with it.

I said not everybody can return good for evil – but we can – we are not everybody – we are God's own, Good for Evil that's our duty – that's our gift – that's our mission. Amen.

*Lord we look beyond the manger to the cross. Help us appreciate the depth of your love for us. Amen.*