

There's No Place Like Home for the Holidays - LOVE, LOVED, LOVING

1 John 4:7-21; John 1:1-18

"A Christmas Story" is not simply an autobiographical retelling of the year a kid got his BB gun and shot his eye out. There is also a love story embedded within it. The "Old Man" _____ that lamp. Why?

It wasn't exactly _____. It wasn't pretty or tasteful. It was a bit socially unacceptable. All it did was cause _____ in his marriage and the neighbors to stop, stare, and talk. But it was _____ and he loved it to the bitter end.

What is Love?

Love is MORE than a _____.

Love is not about _____ at all!

Love is when a person says, "I offer my _____ and my _____ FOR another..."

"My life for _____" not "Your life for _____."

That means love is NOT best epitomized in relationships where others are _____ of our love.

Love is illustrated best when it is given to the _____ and _____ who can't pay us back.

Raising _____ is meant to be a beautiful picture of love.

The _____ that quietly pay for student supplies and resources.

The First _____ that face danger for people they've never met.

_____ is love. (1 John 4:8)

YOU Are Loved

The Bible paints a pretty _____ picture of humanity: rebellious, sinful, _____, frail, weak, and helpless.

We are _____, greedy, violent, ruthless, unkind, adulterers who regularly _____ God of glory in our pride.

We bring an _____ of pain, suffering, and death into the world and are destined for death and _____.

We are as ugly and _____ as the "Old Man's" _____.

Yet, God _____ us. God loves _____. How do we know? Because in spite of our sin, he blesses us.

God didn't keep a safe _____ and stay uninvolved, he came down at Christmas in Jesus.

Jesus shows us God's love by giving up _____ to save us.

He suffered _____, abandonment, isolation, torture, and _____, so that we never have to.

How many people do you love that ignore you, antagonize you, purposely do the opposite of what you ask,

_____ you for all their problems, never accept responsibility themselves, take _____ for everything you do?

*"For while we were still _____, at the right time Christ died for the _____. **7** For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— **8** but God shows his love for us in that while we were still _____, Christ died for us. - Romans 5:6-8*

Called to a life of LOVING

"Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." - 1 John 4:11 "For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?" - Matthew 5:46

Who are the “leg lamps” in your life?

Who are the “unworthy” and “undeserving” in your life?

Who has God given you to love simply because they are his?

Are there people from whom you have withheld love because they can't love you back?

Who in your life have you been saying, “Your life for mine,” and God is asking you to say instead, “My life for yours” ?