

4th Sunday of Advent | Love

[John 1:1-14 NLT]

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 4 In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome[a] it.

6 There was a man sent from God whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. 8 He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

9 The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. 11 He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. 12 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Don't you think the people around us are the same? A while ago, lots of people were wearing WWJD bracelets. They asked the question, if Jesus were you, "what would Jesus do?" The funny thing is most Jesus followers weren't sure of the answer and people who didn't understand Christianity didn't have a clue why people wore the bracelets.

Christmas finally gives us an answer to that elusive question. The creator of us had a plan since before he made the world. At just the right time, he would send his Son, who looks just like him, so we could see his love, "he was full of unfailing love and faithfulness."

So, what would Jesus do? He would make the first move toward a world that didn't understand his Father, toward a world that thought they knew better, toward a world that didn't think they needed him.

A new bracelet has come out. It simply says, "HWLF." It answers WWJD: He would love first. Church, because of Christmas, let's lay aside the human notion of love which is given if someone makes us happy or believes like we do or behaves like we think he or she should. We weren't behaving, we weren't believing, we all had gone astray. God made the first move in sending Jesus. It's time we do what Jesus would do and love first.

Romans 5:5 "...God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us."

Reflection: Christmas is God saying to the world, "Hey, folks, this is who I am, this is what I do." "So the word became human and made his home among us." Sometimes, we just gotta see it to get it.

Prayer: Father, forgive me for trying to love in my own strength. Forgive me for loving so conditionally. Help me love others first, before they deserve it, by the power of your Holy Spirit living in me. Amen.

Next Step: Is there someone you've been withholding love from because of what they believe or how they live? This week do an act of kindness for this person with no strings attached.