

Daily Advent Readings

Advent is a time of preparation. We are getting ready to welcome Christ into our world. During the week, let's spend time reflecting on the story of salvation revealed in the Scriptures and prepare our hearts to receive our newborn King.

This Week's Theme: Love

MONDAY 12.07.20 Isaiah 63:7-9

Isaiah 63 used the Hebrew word *hesed* to express God's steadfast, covenant love, and the Hebrew *ahav* to show God's deep affection for God's people. Human feelings come and go, but God's love is strongly felt (*ahav*) yet also dependable—it "endures forever" (cf. Psalm 136).

TUESDAY 12.08.20 John 3:16-17

This is perhaps the most well-known text in the entire Bible. A scripture that says that God expressed in a personal, redeeming way the depth of God's love for the whole world. God's love did not mean wishing the world well from afar. Instead, God's love led him to become one of us in the person of Jesus.

WEDNESDAY 12.09.20 John 15:9-13

Jesus spoke these yearning words to his disciples the night before he was crucified. He wanted them to understand that the cross was not an accident. Giving himself on the cross expressed his deep love for them. Mark 14:26 said Jesus and the disciples ended their Passover supper by singing together. If they followed the usual practice, they sang Psalm 118, in which the first four verses, repeated that God's love endures forever.

THURSDAY 12.10.20 1 John 4:7-16

In this passage, John repeated that "God is love." All of us love someone or something at times. But John's thought reached beyond that to say that the very essence of God's being is love. "And how do you know that?" someone might have asked John. Advent pointed to the answer. We know God is love, John said, because God sent his only Son into the world on a saving mission.

FRIDAY 12.11.20 Romans 5:1-8

For many Christians, the salvation God's grace offers us produces times of awesome joy and peace. But human emotions are volatile and erratic. At times of pain or doubt, even the strongest, most confident Christ-follower may struggle to feel that "the love of God has been poured out in our hearts." That's why Paul based our ultimate security not in how we feel at any given moment, but in an event. Jesus valued and loved us so much that he died for us.

SATURDAY 12.12.20 Ephesians 3:14-19

Paul's letters included prayers he prayed for the Christian converts in the little house churches he raised up in Asia and Europe. In this passage, sent to Christians at Ephesus, he asked that the Holy Spirit, dwelling in their hearts, would give all believers "the power to grasp love's width and length, height and depth." He used those geometric, almost architectural terms to express his belief that God's love is ultimately bigger than any love we can imagine and it was spiritually vital that we do all we can to grasp and experience that awesome love.

