

“SEE WHAT KIND OF...”
Love For A Broken World

1 John 3:1a: “See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.”

1. Read 3:1a. The phrase “what kind of” can literally mean “from a foreign country.” What is it about God’s love that makes it so unusual and hard to understand? What does it mean to “see” this love? Why is it imperative that we do so?
2. Read 3:1a again. Why is it astonishing that God would call us his children (Eph.2:1–3)? How did he make our being “born of God” possible (see John 1:9–13)? How can we be sure of this (4:13; Rom.5:5)? How else does his Spirit assure us (Rom.8:15–16)? Why do we need to see that we are God’s children?
3. Read 4:9. What does God sending his only Son show us about his kind of love? What is the character of this love (Phil.2:6–7)? How does Luke describe this moment (Luke 2:7)? How does his being laid “in a manger” express God’s love for us (2 Cor.8:9)? What does the phrase “no place for them in the inn” add to our understanding of his love (Isa.53:3)?
4. Read 4:10,14. What else does this say about God’s kind of love? What does his being “the propitiation for our sins” mean (John 1:29)? What does Luke say about this (Luke 2:11)? Read John 3:16–17. How do these words help us see more clearly the kind of love God has for us? What should we do with this love (4:11)?
5. Read 3:1a again. In this study what stands out most to you about God’s love? This Christmas, how can we see and receive this love that God has for us in Jesus?

References:

Q2: Eph.2:1–3: “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.”

John 1:9–13: “The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but born of God.”

1 John 4:13: “By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.”

Rom.5:5: “...and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.”

Rom.8:15–16: “For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoptions as sons, by whom we cry ‘Abba! Father!’ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.”

Q3: 1 John 4:9: “In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.”

Phil.2:6–7: “...who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.”

Luke 2:7: “And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.”

2 Cor.8:9: “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.”

Isa.53:3: “He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.”

Q4: 1 John 4:10: “In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”

1 John 4:14: “And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.”

John 1:29: “The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, ‘Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!’”

Luke 2:11: “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

John 3:16–17: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

1 John 4:11: “Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”