

SERMON NOTES:



Dec 21, 2025

ADVENT WEEK 4
LOVE

Pastor Mick Spann

“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.” (Matthew 7:12)

This command is closely connected to what Jesus identified as ‘the greatest’ commandments:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart... The second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” (Mark 12:30–31)

These are not separate commands, but two sides of the same coin.

1. What Does Jesus Mean by “Love”?

- Jesus is quoting from the Hebrew Scriptures (Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18) which use the word ‘Ahavah’ (translated love).
- Hebrew has multiple words for “love,” but English collapses them into one.
- We “love” many things (people, food, hobbies), but not in the same way.
- So how do we describe the love Jesus was talking about?

2. Love Defined by Jesus Himself

- Early Christians did not define love by dictionaries. They defined it by watching Jesus. They watched:
 - who He moved toward, what He gave up, how He suffered, how He died
- Jesus life reveals that love is a chosen, costly commitment to seek the good of others. Love shows up and says “yes”, even when yes is expensive.

3. Mary’s Love was an expensive “Yes” (Luke 1)

“I am the Lord’s servant... May your word to me be fulfilled.” (Luke 1:38)

- Mary loves God by accepting His mission.
- She loves this child before holding Him. Knowing it may cost her future.
- Simeon later tells her: *“A sword will pierce your own soul too.” (Luke 2:35)*
- Loving Jesus will break her heart — and still, she says yes.

4. Ruth’s Love was steadfast (Ruth 1)

- Ruth opens with darkness: famine, death, grief, and bitterness.
- Ruth has every reason to leave — but she stays, and speaks covenant love: (Ruth 1:16)
“Where you go, I will go... Your people will be my people, and your God, my God.”
- This is not mere emotion. It is steadfast, loyal love.
- Her love doesn’t distinguish between divine or earthly relationship... But loves God by loving Naomi. Faith and real-life commitment are not separated.

5. Boaz: Love That Takes Responsibility

- Boaz ensures Ruth's safety and goes beyond the minimum required by law.
- He does not ask, "What's the least I can do?"
- He asks, "What does love require?"
- Boaz uses his power and resources to reflect the character of Yahweh.
- Love is not only affection — it is responsibility.

6. Love Costs

- Jesus teaches:
"Love your enemies... expecting nothing back." (Luke 6:35)
- Jesus also lived what he taught:
"While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)
- Advent love is not sentimental. It absorbs cost and transforms suffering.
- Jesus is the fullest expression of love: (1 John 4:9)
*"This is how God showed his love among us:
He sent his one and only Son into the world."*
- Love did not shout from heaven — love took on flesh.

7. Practicing Advent Love

- Stay like Ruth — be a faithful presence when it's easier to withdraw.
- Protect like Boaz — use your power or resources to create safety.
- Say yes like Mary — a costly yes that trusts God with the future.
- Ultimately, watch Jesus. See how He does it, follow in His way. Love like Jesus.

COMMONGRACE.COM.AU have put out a great Advent devotional series called "Love Breaks Through"

Safira Stewards devotion "Mary's Courageous Yes" is no. 14



CLICK HERE



You can also see and purchase Safira's works at artbysafina.com.au

Books that have helped Pastor Mick in preparation for this series:



Advent: The Season of Hope
(Fullness Of Time Series)
Tish Harrison Warren

CLICK HERE



Advent For
Everyone
N. T. Wright

CLICK HERE



The Bible Project
"LOVE" Video

CLICK HERE

Advent Word Study
Agape: "Love"





DAY	VERSE	REFLECTION QUESTION
Sunday Dec. 21	Mark 12:29-30	What do you think it looks like to love God with everything you've got, including your strength, affection, intellect, and entire being?
Monday Dec. 22	Mark 12:29-31	How does loving your neighbor as yourself relate to loving God?
Tuesday Dec. 23	Luke 6:35	When you read about God being kind to ungrateful and wicked people, how do you feel?
Wednesday Dec. 24	1 John 4:8-9	What do you think it means when the Bible says God not only acts in love but <i>is</i> love?
Thursday Dec. 25	1 John 4:17	How would you describe the difference between Jesus' way of love and the common understanding of love as something you can fall in or out of?

