

A Christmas Carol: From Bah Humbug to Hope

Week 2: God Bless Us Everyone – Finding Love Among the Wrappings

I John 4:7-12

Love God - During your opening prayer, take time to give thanks to God for His love for you and for all the love in your life.

Grow in Grace

1. Describe a Christmas gift you received which cost little or nothing but meant a great deal to you. What made it so special and meaningful?
2. Scrooge complains, “What’s Christmas time to you but a time for paying bills without money; a time for finding yourself a year older, but not an hour richer.” Why do we put a price tag on things? In what ways do we try to earn others’ love? How do we attempt to earn God’s love?
3. The Apostle John says “God is love” (I John 4:16). John could have used other words to describe God. What does this word reveal about the nature of God? Do we need to earn God’s love?
4. “We love because He first loved us” (I John 4:19). Religions are human attempts to please God and to make God love us. How does the idea that God loved us first change the way we relate to God? Why is it hard for people to accept God’s unconditional love?
5. Scrooge changes from cold heartlessness to compassion in one night. Yet feelings don’t change anything. How can love inspire feelings and yet be more than a feeling? Why do we tend to reduce love down to just feelings?
6. John tells us love is an action. “Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.” (I John 3:18) Why is important to do the actions of love even when we don’t feel loving? Can you give an example of this from your life?
7. Read I John 3:16-17. What actions did Jesus take to show us His love for us? What does God want us to do to show His love is in us? In what ways do you pass on the love of God?
8. Read I John 4:7-8. How are knowing God and loving God linked? If love is the basis of the Christian community why are there so many conflicts in churches and between churches?

Share with Others

1. What is one practical action you can take to share the love of God with someone this Christmas?
2. Who is someone you find hard to get along with? What can you do to express God’s unconditional love to that person?
3. A major theme in *A Christmas Carol* is seeing and helping the poor. What can you do in the coming year to show God’s love to those in need?

Love God – Ask God to open your eyes to the needs around you and then give you the power to make a difference in someone’s life.