**The Ultimate Love**

**12**“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. **13**Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. **14**You are my friends if you do what I command you. **15**No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. **16**You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. **17**These things I command you, so that you will love one another. (John 15:12-17, ESV)

Beginning from his birth and throughout his whole life, Jesus is the Ultimate Love. Greetings to you dear brothers and sisters as we talk today about love, which is a primary part of God’s identity. God sent his Son to a world that had already become spiritually tired and needed his intervention. When Jesus was born, Israel was an oppressed, weakened, and enslaved entity both from the Roman Empire as well as by her own religious leadership. Jesus’ birth was God’s manifestation of love to the world; and for that reason, today we’re going to connect the above verses to his birth. Whether through his birth or words, Jesus’ primary mission was to make God known to us, since that was his greatest work of love. Let’s talk, then, about Jesus’ teaching, which was going to become increasingly clearer to people as he grew and stepped into ministry…

God loved people, and thus Jesus was born. The passage in question contains the primary reason for Jesus’ life and works – namely, love. God is love. God did not desire that that love end with him. Jesus, in turn, loved his disciples by being with them, choosing them, teaching them, encouraging them thru miracles, protecting them, and making the Father known to them. However, all of this would be in vain if they did not love each other. If God sent Jesus out of love, and if Jesus loved people so much that he sacrificed himself for all, then the disciples were called to love one another.

Very often, when we receive a gift, we send a thank you card or note. It is our expression of gratitude to the person. In Jesus’ days, when a rich person built a building for the beautification of a city, the governor or leader of that city was expected to extol and praise that patron everywhere that he went. It was almost like his debt that he owed, without ever being officially asked to do it.

Today, keeping in mind that God loved the world so much so that Jesus was born, that he loved me and you so much that he healed, preached, taught, sacrificed himself, got up from the grave, sat in heaven and sent the Spirit, let us respond by our sign of gratitude, which is to love each other. The birth of Jesus is an important work of love. Second to the Crucifixion and Resurrection, it is perhaps the most loving thing God ever did.

Therefore, if you need a reason to love that unlovable person in your life, remember that God visited you with the Good News of Jesus when you were totally lost. Remember that Jesus was born, that there is salvation through him, there is new life, forgiveness, and a new beginning with him. May our answer to God’s loving invitation be affirmative. May we say “yes” to Jesus’ presence, be it at his birth, through his teachings, or his self-sacrifice.

God loved people, and thus Jesus was born. Whether through his birth or his words, Jesus’ primary mission was to make God known to us, because that is the greatest act of love. The Lord Bless you all, Amen.