

ADVENT CONSPIRACY #5: "LOVE ALL"

▶ *Luke 6:32 – [Jesus]: "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them."*

Loving ALL

- Loving family members is good, but it's not necessarily a sign of being Jesus' disciple (although it certainly could be). But Jesus' point is that if you want to live like his disciple, then **love all** – especially those who *won't* thank you or give you a gift in return.
- Recall Matthew 25 where Jesus told us that what we do for the needy, we're actually doing for Him. And that makes it a very fitting thing to do during Christmas since this is a party in memory of his birth. So *he* should get the most gifts!

LOVING ALL

- ▶ *2 Corinthians 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 through his poverty might become rich."*
- When Jesus left heaven he left a reality that was uncontaminated by sin, and unrestricted by physical limitations. And he comes here to earth - to sin, to physical limitations, to rejection, to friends with dull minds and broken hearts.
 - He came "for your sakes." He had something we needed. He had something from this other dimension that would heal our wounds, mend our brokenness, redirect us from our rebellion, and save us from our sins.
 - We could say that He came bearing gifts – for our sakes. And these gifts he comes bearing actually make *us* rich.
 - ➔ *If we are spiritually rich through Jesus coming to earth . . . AND if we are financially rich when we compare ourselves to the rest of the world and the needy in this country . . . is this not a powerful combination that has the potential to team up and make a powerful difference in someone else's life?*
 - The best gifts are gifts that last a lifetime. They are gifts that equip people to live – not just enable people to live.

The Case for Giving Water as Love

- ▶ *"If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water'" John 7:37-38*
- Thirst is core to both our physical and spiritual conditions.

- Water is in crisis around the world (examples: Jordan River; Kilimanjaro, Africa). And in America we probably over use our share.
- "WASH" is an industry-standard acronym for Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene. WASH represents the essential components of sustainable water development. Safe water, adequate sanitation, and effective hygiene practices are all necessary for accessing, using, and maintaining safe water that contributes to long-term physical health.

Some Facts on Water

- One out of 8 people in the world do not have access to safe water.
- Some 4,000-6,000 people die each day from water related illnesses.
- Many of the world's poor take their water from unprotected sources, such as surface water and inadequate wells).
- According to the United Nations Development Program, for every \$1 invested in water and sanitation, \$8 is returned with increased productivity.
- The provision of protected wells equipped with a handpump can profoundly impact a community, and costs about \$5,000.
- Other safe water solutions, especially for dispersed communities, are household filtration systems.
 - ◆ The Messiah College Water Purification Project is working to provide filtration systems to poor communities in Central America and seeks to partner with churches such as CVC in this endeavor.

➔ *Providing clean water to the world's poor is a tangible, if not powerful, demonstration of Christ's love, and it can open the hearts of entire communities to the Gospel.*

Internet sources:

- Messiah College Collaboratory Water Purification Project: www.messiah.edu/collaboratory/our_work/project4.html
- Sawyer Point One Filter Systems: www.sawyerpointonefilters.com
- Forward Edge: www.forwardedge.org

How to Give Water

1. If using a check through CVC numbered Giving Envelopes: Put amount in "Other" line and note "Clean Water".
2. If by separate check: Make checks out to "CVC" and put "Clean Water" in the memo line. Place in offering plate or in Treasurer mail box.
3. Cash: Put cash in brown envelopes available behind pews, put "Clean Water" on outside of envelope and place in offering plate.