

Awestruck: Reigniting the Awe of our Salvation

February Week 1 Devotional: “The Nature of God’s Divine Love”

Scripture Reading: 1 John 4:7-11

In 2018, a father named Michael Cisneros received every parent’s worst phone call—his adult son, Kevin, who struggled with addiction, had gone missing. Days turned into weeks. Weeks turned into months. Most people told Michael what grieving parents often hear: “You’ve done all you can. It’s time to go home.”

But Michael refused to stop searching—not because his son had earned it, not because he deserved it, but simply because he was his son. Months later, Michael found Kevin alive, sitting outside a shelter—dirty, ashamed, and convinced his father would be angry. Instead, his father hugged him and said, “I never stopped looking for you.”

That is not convenient love.
That is not earned love.
That is initiating, relentless love.

Scripture tells us this is only a shadow of God’s love for us. While we were lost, wandering, and running, God came looking for us. He didn’t wait for us to clean ourselves up. He stepped into the mess to bring us home. Five observations from 1 John 4:7-11:

I. God’s Love Is Who He Is

The Bible doesn’t say God has love. It says, “God is love” (1 John 4:8). That means love isn’t something God turns on or off depending on our behavior. Love is rooted in His very nature.

God doesn’t love us more on our good days or less on our bad days. His love doesn’t rise and fall with our faithfulness. Because God is love, everything He does flows from love—even His correction, discipline, and commands.

Think of the difference between a faucet and an ocean. A faucet gives water only when it’s turned on. An ocean gives water because water is what it is. God’s love is not a faucet—it’s an ocean.

II. God’s Love Moves First

Human love is often reactive. We love because someone did something for us, earned our trust, or met our expectations. But God’s love works differently.

John writes, “This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son” (1 John 4:10).

God made the first move.
God loved us while we were still sinners.
God ran toward us before we ever turned toward Him.

Like a firefighter rushing into a burning house, God didn't pause to ask who caused the fire. He came to rescue. Our repentance didn't start God's love—God's love made repentance possible.

III. God's Love Costs Something

God didn't just say, "I love you." He showed it. He sent His one and only Son so that we could live through Him. The cross is the clearest picture of sacrificial love the world has ever seen. Jesus bore our sin, our shame, and our punishment so that we could be forgiven and restored.

Real love always costs something. If love costs us nothing—no time, no pride, no comfort—it probably isn't the kind of love God demonstrates. God's love gives, serves, and sacrifices for the good of others.

IV. God's Love Never Lets Go

Romans 8 reminds us that nothing—absolutely nothing—can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Not suffering. Not failure. Not fear. Not death.

God didn't spare His own Son, so we can trust that He won't abandon us now. His love is not fair-weather love. It does not retreat when life gets hard. It stays. It holds. It finishes what it starts.

V. God's Love Changes Us

John ends with a challenge: "If God so loved us, we also ought to love one another" (1 John 4:11).

God's love doesn't stop with us—it transforms us. It gives us the power to love others in ways we could never do on our own. Loving like Jesus isn't natural for us, but it becomes possible when His love lives in us.

Reflection:

When you flip on a light in a dark room, you don't debate whether electricity exists—the light proves the power is real. In the same way, the cross proves God's love is real. Today, rest in this truth: God didn't stop looking for you. God moved first. God paid the price. God will never let go. And as His love fills you, let that light shine through the way you love others this week.