



Jesus, the Love Song of God

■ by Linda Ostlund, MA, LCPC

What is a “love song”? Love songs are usually about romantic love: falling in love, heartbreak after a breakup, and the feelings that these experiences bring. It has been estimated that more than 100 million love songs have been recorded, and the variety is staggering.

Why do we listen to love songs? The best love songs articulate something that we wish we could have said, or they give us a taste of what we desire. Listener experience varies: You may identify with the song’s narrator, or you may like to imagine yourself as the object of desire being sung to. Can you imagine God sang to you a “love song”? He did, and this is how it happened.

God’s Love Song

Long ago, God took the initiative to sing a love song to the world. In the gospel of Luke, we read, “Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord’s glory surrounded them.” And the angel said, “I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!” (Luke 2:9, 10b, 11) The shepherds then went to the village in Bethlehem and found a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger (i.e., a feed box for animals). How does a baby lying in a feed box for animals express the love song of God?

Love is an emotional identification. It considers nothing of its own but gives all freely to the object of its affection. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only begotten son...” (John 3:16a) The baby lying in the manger was the second Person of the triune Godhead—the Son of God, incarnate. What God wanted to do was to deliver mankind from his sin and restore relationship between man and his Creator. So God intervened by sending His son, the Lord Jesus Christ. In considering God’s love song, it is different from romantic songs of love.

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Luke 2:11 (NLT)

The Difference

God’s song of love is not to be thought of as sentimentality. God’s song of love is not some vague, theoretical thing, a woolly benevolence. It is different from all kinds of human songs of love. His song of love is intended to give to those whom He loves precisely what they could not in any way acquire, since they have nothing to give in return. It appears romantic songs of love fall short.

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Love that Falls Short

We can begin to see the difference. The romantic song of love is love dependent on attraction, achievement, and what you can give to the lover. If the love between lover and the loved is broken, the result can lead to emotional emptiness, loneliness, and depression. Such feelings within people, especially during the holidays, is evident. For example, loneliness already is an American epidemic with 60% of Americans reporting loneliness even before COVID. What is more disturbing, loneliness for many people leads to suicide. Suicide among people is the feeling of hopelessness and despair; the assumed only way out is to end one's life. More than 700,000 people die due to suicide every year. In the month of December 2020, 132 people died from suicide per day. What does this tell us? Romantic songs of love seem to fall short to truly satisfying the love-need in people. So, what makes God's love so lasting?

God's Love

The one Jesus loved proclaimed, "God is love." (1 John 4:8b) John was stating a fact! The words "God is love" mean that love is an essential attribute of God; He is the inherent nature of love. We can know that because God is self-existent: His love had no beginning; because He is eternal, His love can have no end; because He is infinite, it has no limit. That's lasting love; it means that love is of the essence of His being.

So God sent Jesus. He laid in a manger, but overshadowing the manger was a cross. It was in crucifixion that we see love lavished on sinners. Mankind was in so much spiritual trouble that it required no less than the Son of God to get him out of it. When we see man for what he is, the wrath of God for what it is, and the cross for what it is, then and only then do we see love for what it is. It is in God and in God alone that we come to understand what love is.

If you anticipate this Christmas season to be a holiday of loneliness for you, consider Jesus. It is in the love of God He tells us He is friendly, and the Bible assures us that He is your friend and wants you to be His friend. This holiday you can choose lasting love: Embrace Jesus, the love song of God! ■



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