

## God with Us Brings Love

### Day 11 FEARLESS LOVE

**There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. (1 John 4:18)**

There is a story singer-songwriter David Wilcox tells about two old neighboring farmers who had a long running feud going. It had started over a cat they both fed and claimed as their own. The neighbors quit talking, and the grudge escalated into a rerouted creek to divide their properties. When a carpenter came through town looking for work, one farmer hired the man to build a fence so he would not have to look at his neighbor's place. When the farmer returned home, he saw that the carpenter had built a bridge across the creek instead of a barrier. Soon across it came his apologetic neighbor exclaiming, "You are a brave man; I did not think you would want to hear the sound of my voice again." Wilcox uses the story as an introduction to his song called "Fearless Love," the kind that makes us cross the borders and barriers that we put up.

The love delivered to earth by God with Us is a love that defies and overcomes fear. It's a love not of this world but one that runs against the grain of how our world operates. It was true in Jesus' day when He taught us to love our enemies, and it continues today. It contradicted the Jews' expectations for a Messiah and challenged the systems of fearful oppression - instead of overthrowing the Romans, He taught them to carry a soldier's pack twice as far as the Roman law required (Matthew 5:41). Jesus' perfect love fills us and displaces the fear that drives us towards self-centered and hurtful actions. It fills us instead with the strength and compassion to overcome our fear and reach out to others. It is a perfect and powerful love that entered our humanity so humbly on the night on that night in Bethlehem.

***Who or what are you fearful of? What steps of love can you take this season to overcome barriers, divisions, or even past hurts?***